

A formative evaluation of an Aotearoa New Zealand family/whānau  
violence programme: Examining facilitators' perspectives of goodness of  
fit, efficacy, and fidelity.

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## **Abstract**

Family/whānau violence and intimate partner violence are now unquestionably seen as a major social burden internationally and in Aotearoa New Zealand (Martin et al., 2006). In our communities there are some populations that are significantly more vulnerable to experiencing violence and crime (Slabber, 2012; Understanding Family Violence, 2017), and in Aotearoa the statistics consistently show that Māori are over represented in family violence experiences. Despite increasing efforts to address these challenges, there continues to be a scarcity of intervention strategies that are culturally-adapted, much less culturally-based (Leske et al., 2016; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010). This study attempted to understand the goodness of fit, efficacy, and fidelity of a novel, culturally-centred programme supporting fathers desisting from intimate-partner and family/whānau violence. Employing kaupapa Māori research principles and a qualitative collaborative evaluation research design, five programme facilitators were interviewed. The findings revealed that facilitators strongly endorsed the utility and integration of three programme values, including aroha, manaakitanga, and whanaungatanga. However, facilitators believed the programme's three remaining values (wairuatanga, mana motuhake, and ako) were less integrated. The findings also identified facilitators' perspectives of several factors that foster the efficacy of the programme, including the deconstruction and reconceptualisation of key Māori cultural concepts such aroha and mana, the re-evaluation of the tāne Māori identity, and the integral group processes of whanaungatanga and manaakitanga. Finally, in investigating fidelity, the current research identified that facilitators diverged from the programme content at varying degrees which offered insight into potential areas or need for programme revision and/or amendments and emphasised the tension that exists between programme adaptation and programme fidelity (Leske et al., 2016). These findings

are discussed in light of the programme's content, culturally-responsive group facilitation, and as related to the broader whānau violence literature in Aotearoa and international best-practice recommendations when working with fathers with a history of violence.

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## Glossary Of Māori Words | Te kuputaka

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>ako</b>            | reciprocal learning                        |
| <b>Aotearoa</b>       | New Zealand                                |
| <b>aro</b>            | to protect another's life essence          |
| <b>awhi</b>           | embrace                                    |
| <b>hapu</b>           | subtribe                                   |
| <b>iwi</b>            | Broader tribal connection                  |
| <b>kaupapa</b>        | work, ways of being and doing              |
| <b>karakia</b>        | prayer                                     |
| <b>koha</b>           | gift given in appreciation                 |
| <b>kōrero</b>         | discussion, conversation, discourse        |
| <b>kaumātua</b>       | elder/s                                    |
| <b>kupu</b>           | word(s)                                    |
| <b>mana</b>           | prestige/respect accorded to an individual |
| <b>manaaki</b>        | care for others                            |
| <b>manaakitanga</b>   | to enhance the mana of others.             |
| <b>motuhake</b>       | self-determination and agency              |
| <b>mātauranga</b>     | knowledge, wisdom                          |
| <b>ngā hau e wha</b>  | the four winds of Tāwhirimātea             |
| <b>tamariki</b>       | children                                   |
| <b>tāne</b>           | Māori man                                  |
| <b>taonga</b>         | treasure                                   |
| <b>Tangata whenua</b> | Indigenous peoples of New Zealand          |

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>tapu</b>                 | sacred, holy, not common                 |
| <b>te ao Māori</b>          | the Māori world                          |
| <b>tikanga</b>              | protocols                                |
| <b>te Tiriti o Waitangi</b> | the Treaty of Waitangi                   |
| <b>wairua</b>               | spiritual existence and spirituality     |
| <b>whakapapa</b>            | genealogy, lineage, descent              |
| <b>whakawhanaungatanga</b>  | establishing a connection between people |
| <b>whanaungatanga</b>       | interconnected, reciprocal relationships |
| <b>whānau</b>               | family group                             |

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## **1 Chapter One: Introduction | Kupu Arataki**

Family violence and intimate partner violence are now unquestionably cemented as a major social and economic burden internationally and in Aotearoa New Zealand (Aotearoa) Martin et al., 2006). In recent decades, the profound impact of family violence in society has led to a “rush to implement prevention programs” despite the hidden nature of the behaviour and challenges in researching the topic (MacMillan, 2005, p. 618). Family violence occurs most frequently in settings where individuals and families are most vulnerable, and often, much of the details are known only to the members of the household, including children.

This first chapter of this thesis serves to orient the reader to the key themes and research disciplines that focus on understanding, preventing, and intervening in family/whānau violence, intimate partner violence (IPV), and the opportunities and challenges when evaluating such programmes. After reviewing this broader context, I review a number of programmes aiming to curb the persistence of family/whānau violence and the efficacy, challenges, and outcomes related to these programmes. These topics, complex on their own, also intersect with important cultural, historical, and political contexts of both past and present. In Aotearoa, despite being a country that was colonised like many others, we have a unique historical narrative, which many believe has also influenced the high rates of family violence among Māori. In that regard, this thesis explicitly focuses on Aotearoa’s tangata whenua, Māori, the indigenous people of Aotearoa, and prioritises their story and their worldview. In addition, this work prioritises the journey of men who are attempting to transform their lives, and the lives of their family/whānau, through confronting the violence that they have perpetrated. Nevertheless, this research is also mindful of the victims of family/whānau violence, the partners and children of these

men whose very lives continue to be in danger if our prevention and intervention efforts are not effective.

### **1.1 Family Violence and Intimate Partner Violence: An Introduction**

Family violence is a broad term which encompasses physical, sexual, emotional and psychological abuse of and by children, parents, elders, siblings, and intimate partners (Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit, 2017; Family Violence Death Review Committee – Fifth Report, 2015; Polaschek, 2016). Research has shown that approximately 70% of family violence offences in Aotearoa occur when there are children in the household and that 14% of children in Aotearoa have witnessed adults at home physically hurting other adults and/or children (Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit, 2017). Whilst intimate partner violence (IPV) relates to violence between adults in a close personal relationship, these events frequently occur in the context of wider family/whānau, where children are more likely to be present. The prevalence of family/whānau violence is difficult to determine; however, it is estimated that between 30% to 60% of child abuse occurs in households where IPV is co-occurring (Morrison & Davenne, 2016), and that approximately 70% of children who witness family/whānau violence are also victims of physical abuse (Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit, 2017). The risk is thought to increase if the abuse is bi-directional between parents. The “What Works For Children Exposed to Family Violence” report states that “exposure to family violence can include seeing, hearing, being directly involved (for example, trying to intervene), or experiencing the aftermath of family violence” (Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit, 2017, p 2). This is an important development because terms such as “witness” or “observe” highlight the impact of the indirect subjective experiences of those living in a household where IPV occurs. It also importantly establishes that any exposure to violence in the home can be considered a form

of maltreatment. The Family Violence Death Review Committee (FVDRC-5) stated that “children’s exposure to IPV is a form of abuse” (2019, p. 53), and explain that the trauma, stress and anticipatory anxiety associated with experiencing IPV creates similar ‘fight or flight’ responses to being abused directly. These stress related responses, in turn, burden children with states of hyper-arousal and hypervigilance. The effects of such states will be discussed later in this chapter. Cummings and Davis (2010, p.7) state that marital conflict and violence could also be linked to “insensitivity, neglect, insecure attachment and lack of parental warmth toward children” which stands to reason that even if a child is not directly involved in child abuse or neglect (CAN) or IPV they are certainly likely to be impacted via their caregivers capacity to parent under stressful circumstances.

Past understandings of IPV consisted of framing partner violence as a private marital matter that was in-part due to dysfunction within that particular relationship dyad and that the violence was incited by, or a reaction to the victim’s actions (FVDRC-5R, 2016). Frequently IPV is defined, measured, and reported as incidences of physical violence (usually perpetrated by a male) which is having a current impact of the victim (usually experienced by a female). The FVDRC (2016, p. 50) seeks to offer a more contemporary conceptualisation of IPV by reframing it as a “pattern of cumulative harm” where there is a pattern of “coercive and controlling behaviours that can encompass multiple victims (adults and children) – past, current and future” with the knowledge that patterns of control and coercion expressed by the person using violence is not likely to cease from one relationship to another. Therefore, there should be the anticipation of hidden and future victims (FVDRC -5R, 2016).

This reframing of IPV is considered pivotal to how society addresses what some describe as an epidemic (Hoeata et al, 2011). As will be described later in this chapter, there

is still the need for refining the definition to include the impacts of bi-directional violence between male and female partners, as well as the dynamics in LGBTQI+ relationships. In addition, the traditional, narrow view of IPV may inhibit the way it is researched, assessed, and addressed. For example, if IPV is continued to be seen as isolated physical incidences reported to police, then this is what social and justice systems will focus on, rather than the more subtle and insidious ways that IPV can be expressed (e.g., coercion and control). Moreover, this approach fails acknowledge elements across an individual's ecological contexts that make them vulnerable to both using and experiencing violence.

When describing family violence and child abuse it is relevant to include “physical discipline” and “corporal punishment” because of how it is viewed within the legal/political contexts and systems within Aotearoa, and the psychosocial impact on children's outcomes. Evidence also suggests that physical punishment strategies for child behaviour management creates greater risk of escalation to physical abuse (Afifi et al., 2017; Russa & Rodriguez, 2010). The use of physical discipline operates within differing cultural, historical and contextual backdrops internationally. Regardless of the context, the American Psychological Association's (APA) “Physical Discipline Resolution” (2019) declares that physical discipline is an ineffective parenting or teaching strategy (to aid child compliance), and has the potential to psychologically harm children. Hineline and Rosales-Ruiz (2012) define punishment as “an aversive stimulus that follows a behaviour to reduce the likelihood that the behaviour will occur again” (p. 485). The United Nations (2007) specify that physical discipline shares the definition quoted above and includes physical force as the “mechanism” of punishment. The action (usually a strike to the buttocks or extremities) is generally considered an attempt to modify the child's behaviour by means of the child experiencing some form of pain or discomfort without causing physical injury to the child (United Nations, 2007; Straus, 2000).

APA's (2019) stance on physical discipline is that it has several fundamental negative outcomes for both children and parents including; disruption and reduction in the quality of parent-child attachment relationship, modelling of aggressive behaviours to children, whereby the child inadvertently learns that in order to resolve conflict or attain the desired outcome one should use physical force, and other negative social, emotional and behavioural outcomes (Larzelere & Kuhn, 2005; Coyl et al., 2002; Olson et al., 2011). In conjunction with these findings, physical discipline has not been found to be more effective, in regard to compliance, than other less aversive methods such as taking away privileges, using time out, or reasoning with the child. Nor does physical discipline act to enrich children's positive development such as self-reflection on their behaviour (Larzelere & Kuhn, 2005). Many outcome variables including developmental and behavioural adjustment are thought to be negatively impacted by frequent or severe corporal punishment. So much so, that research has suggested that the impact on individuals experiencing it may be equally severe as those who witness or experience family violence (Font, 2017). The effects of these experiences may follow through into adulthood and include associations with lower mental health, decreased cognitive development, lower school grades, and higher antisocial behaviours including aggression (Moffitt & Caspi, 2003).

Internationally, 52 countries enforce that all forms of physical punishment of children, including in the home, are punishable by law (Runyon et al., 2017). Nevertheless, cross-culturally, attitudes and practices regarding the physical punishment of children vary widely (Lansford et al, 2015). Benjet and Kazdin (2003, p. 198) state that "the practice of hitting children as part of discipline is deeply embedded in religious beliefs, cultural views, government, law, and social policy". In the United States it is legal to hit your child if that hitting does not result in "physical harm" (Benjet & Kazdin, 2003). In contrast, since 2007 in

Aotearoa, it is illegal to “smack” or hit your child as a means of discipline. Importantly, and as will be described in detail in later sections of this study, in te ao Māori, the practice of physical punishment/discipline traditionally was never endorsed.

In summary, family/whānau violence encompasses a broad category of behaviours ranging from excessive corporal punishment to abuse toward both children and adults. In addition to explicit behaviours, family/whānau violence also entails psychological elements including harsh parenting, psychological abuse of both partners and children, and treatment of children whereby their emotional, physical and psychological needs are left unmet or at worst purposefully denied. The scope of this issue is likely underestimated; however, the knowledge of its detrimental impacts for both children and adult victims is well documented and a number of theories exist that attempt to explain why individuals use violence. Overall, the current study is interested in how family/whānau violence is particularly situated within Aotearoa. As has been implied, the conceptualisation and impact of family/whānau violence is also an area of investigation and offers great insight and justification for the need for effective programmes. This contextualisation allows the reader to understand how a novel, culturally-centred whānau violence programme is situated within the wider approach to intervention and offers scope for considering its efficacy.

## **1.2 Impact of Violence**

The rates of family/whānau violence in Aotearoa are of considerable concern and have garnered increasing attention, particularly in relation to efforts to minimise harm and to interrupt the intergenerational nature of its course. However, as illustrated in the opening discussion, family/whānau violence is not a homogenous phenomenon, nor are the people who experience it. Therefore the following subsection offers insight into the impact of violence on victims in order to contextualise the importance of intervention.

According to the FVDRC (2016) the best way to conceptualise exposure to family violence is that it results in ‘cumulative harm’ highlighting that the effects of exposure are not singular but build overtime. Holt (2008) describes how the last three (now four) decades have amassed “unprecedented interest in the scope and consequences of children’s exposure to domestic violence” (p.798). Research suggests that exposure to family/whānau violence operates via direct and indirect routes and is beginning to recognise the impact of cumulative harm on children’s wellbeing and development and the outcomes for adult victims in relation to both mental and physical health (Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit, 2017; Cummings & Davies, 2010; FVDRC , 2019). Tracing the factors that contribute to cumulative harm implicates different levels of ecological systems and historical trauma (both individually and collectively). Thus, factors such as the impact of colonisation on tangata whenua, intergenerational abuse which may erode the capacity for parents to parent sensitively and effectively, and the experience of multiple forms of childhood abuse and neglect in one whānau, all need to be considered together when questioning how family/whānau violence affects family/whānau members.

### **1.2.1 Family Violence and Children**

**A Neurodevelopmental Perspective.** Hertzman (2012) defines development as a series of interactions that involves a cascading series of events that necessitate the developing individual to constantly react and respond to fluctuating demands in an adaptive manner. ‘Normal’ brain development relies on a remarkable “set and sequence of developmental and environmental experiences that influence the expression of the genome” (Anda et al., 2006, p. 174). What we know about this complex sequence during childhood brain development is that it is cumulative and sequential and that it is vulnerable to disruption, particularly during sensitive and circumscribed periods. Childhood



experiences are vital in this process; as Perry and Pollard (1998) describe, life is a dynamic and continuous stream of experience and as humans we seek to maintain “some stability, equilibrium, and homeostasis.” (p.34). When a child experiences severe, repetitive or irregular patterns of stress during these critical periods, they are increasingly susceptible to a permanent disruption to the activity of major neuroregulatory systems, which in turn result in neurobehavioral consequences. The neurodevelopmental perspective postulates that this disruption is a result of the over-activation/repetitive-activation or fatigue of specialised stress-response mechanisms.

As an adaptive means of survival, the brain mediates the activation of the central and peripheral nervous systems, and neuroendocrine and immune responses when under perceived threat. Once the threat is dispelled the child’s physiological system returns to homeostasis. The exposure to severe, chronic, and unpredictable environments reorganises the individual’s basal patterns and results in what Perry and Pollard (1998) refer to as “trauma-induced homeostasis”, which consumes more energy, is less functional in ‘normal’ life, and is more likely to lead to both maladaptive behavioural and psychological outcomes. Moreover, abuse, traumatic stress, and the lack of developmentally appropriate experience is likely to result in abnormalities in brain organisation and structure (Anda, 2006; Perry 2002). Anda et al. (2006, p. 175) state “childhood abuse and exposure to domestic violence can lead to numerous differences in the structure and physiology of the brain that expectedly would affect multiple human functions and behaviours”. The neurobiological perspective of family/whānau violence proposes that negative outcomes beyond immediate physical and emotional harm, particularly in relation to mental health, behaviour, and impulse control, are a result of the interruption of important structural and developmental processes as a result of chronic stress.

**Psychosocial symptoms.** Evans et al (2008) reviewed 60 studies that examined the association between childhood exposure to domestic violence and children's internalising, externalising, and trauma symptoms. Whilst they found moderate to large effect sizes for this relationship (.48, .47 and 1.54 for internalising, externalising and trauma symptoms respectively), other meta-analyses (e.g., Wolfe et al.'s, 2003; Kitzmann et al., 2003; Chan & Yeung, 2009) have documented smaller effect sizes. Importantly, in Wolfe et al.'s (2003) work, the authors found that where children also experienced abuse (in conjunction with exposure to domestic violence) this was associated with a greater level of emotional and behavioural problems over and above exposure to IPV alone. Research into the psychological sequelae in children indicates that childhood physical abuse results in higher likelihood of developing symptoms or a diagnosis of PTSD, mood and anxiety disorders, altered and often inappropriate stress responses, and environmental sensitivity (Cummings & Davies, 2010; Runyon et al., 2017; Langley & Millichamp, 2006). For children who experience or are exposed to IPV and direct abuse, their interpersonal relationships are more likely to be hampered by increased aggression, non-compliance, and low self-esteem. This is also linked to children being more likely to form relationships with other anti-social peers and to engage in more anti-social rather than prosocial behaviour in adolescence (Runyon et al., 2017; Cummings & Davies, 2010).

**Cognitive effects.** Kitzmann et al., (2003) conducted a meta-analysis including 118 studies between 1978-2000 that surveyed the psychosocial consequences for children exposed to IPV. The results indicated that 67 percent of children exposed to family violence were at risk of a variety of developmental and adjustment difficulties including overall wellbeing, cognitive ability, psychological health and academic success. Further evidence of this was found in later research indicating that children who experience any form of family

violence are more likely to develop cognitive, social, emotional and behavioural problems (Ti Rito, 2002; Vu et al., 2016; Cummings & Davies, 2010). However, Danese et al (2017) conducted a study which tested the association between prospectively gathered data relating to childhood violence victimisation and cognitive functions in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood utilising participants of the New Zealand Dunedin Study and the U.K. E-Risk Study (participants were followed from birth to 38 years and 18 years respectively). The researchers utilised multiple measures of victimisation and cognition and found that cognitive deficits are “largely explained by pre-existing cognitive vulnerabilities and nonspecific effects of socioeconomic disadvantage” (p. 356). This research provides insight into the cognitive capacity and vulnerabilities of children before they are victimised, and although this research challenges the causal link between cognitive dysfunction as a result of victimisation, it also highlights the multiple risk factors evident in the lives of children who are victimised. These pre-existing vulnerabilities indicate that children who experience childhood victimisation have less cognitive resources and problem solving capacities than those who do not, are more likely to have parents with the same cognitive vulnerabilities, and are more likely to be impacted by socioeconomic disadvantage.

### ***1.2.2 Effects of family violence for partners.***

Family violence impacts the fabric and functioning of the family/whānau. The literature, although not as vast and advanced as the literature on children, indicates the clear and debilitating impact of family/whānau violence on adult victims (Dillon et al, 2012; Carbone-López et al., 2006). Additionally, the literature is heavily weighted toward the female experience of violence (Magdol, 1997) and undeniably fails to capture in adequate detail the experience of men and LGBTQI+ victims and survivors of violence. This is despite the fact that LGBTQI+ IPV occurs at equivalent or higher rates than within the heterosexual

cisgender community (Decker, 2018). Edwards (2015), in their critical review of the literature on IPV among sexual minority populations, identify a myriad of psychological, physical and social impacts of LGBTQI+ victimisation. The outcomes of this group tend to also be poorer in regards to psychological, academic and behavioural functioning (Dank et al, 2014) and the same as cisgender victims in health and quality of life outcomes (still negative in nature; Blosnich & Bossarte 2009). It is probable that the increased likelihood of poorer outcomes is related to the poorer social support systems, identity concealment, and less education and acknowledgement of IPV within LGBTQI+ individuals. There are also an increased number a barriers to help-seeking including a lack of appropriate, accessible, and inclusive services and social stigmatisation (Edwards, 2015).

A meta-analysis by Archer (2000) that focused on heterosexual partners described two contradictory perspectives relating to inter-partner physical violence. The first perspective from family conflict researchers is that inter-partner violence involves “a considerable degree of mutual combat” (p. 651). In contrast, the second perspective from feminist writers is that family violence “generally involves male perpetrators and female victims” (Archer, 2006, p. 651). Archer (2006) explained that the adopted school of thought is typically determined by the sample surveyed (e.g., feminist scholars researching female victims and their children), and that the consequences of this means the perspectives utilise non-overlapping samples. Magdol and colleagues (1999) describe how early studies assumed that men were more likely to perpetrate violence than women because of sample selection processes. Their birth cohort study of 21 year-olds, as part of The Dunedin Study, is in agreement with Archer’s (2006) finding and indicates that 21.8% of men report perpetrating partner violence in comparison to 37.2% of women. These estimates too are

highly consistent with rates in similar cohort studies conducted in the USA (National Family Violence Surveys and the National Youth Survey).

If the above is true, why then is there such an emphasis on female victimisation of physical violence and why is there such a focus on interventions specifically for men and very few for women? There are multiple hypotheses for this, one of which explains that men are more likely to attack, and women are more likely to react. This hypothesis also suggests that the motivations for violence for men tends to revolve around control and exertion of power, whereas the violence initiated by women is thought to be a reaction to their circumstances (Stets & Straus, 1990). Independent of this hypothesis, and several others, what is clear is that other forms of violence (sexual, psychological, and financial) are more likely to be perpetrated by men (FVDRC -5R, 2016), and in conjunction with physical violence fall under the broader definition of IPV. The factors involved in IPV are associated with a larger gender system which “generates and reinforces inequity which often gives men power over women through the distribution of resources, social norms, institutional practices, social interactions, and internalised beliefs and identities” (McCarthy et al., 2018, p. 2). Regardless of why there might be a large gender imbalance in the research on victims of IPV, for the purposes of this study and the programme under review it is important to have some understanding of the recent literature that examines acts of violence (physical, sexual, emotional, or other psychological) in intimate partner relationships, acknowledging that the vast majority of studies included have focused on women as victims.

Consistent with prior research, there exists extensive comorbidity associated with IPV, including increased risk for chronic health problems, chronic mental illness, injury, and substance abuse among both men and women (Carbone-López et al., 2006; Coker et al., 2002; Campbell, 2002). Both males and female victims regardless of type of IPV they

experience, are more likely to experience negative mental and physical health problems. Dillon et al's (2012) review of the literature across a range of samples (including clinical, community and shelter) from a varied range of cultures also supports these results whereby there is an increased likelihood to develop depression (Chandra et al., 2009; Blasco-Ros., 2010), PTSD (Chandra et al., 2009; Eshelman & Levendosky, 2012), anxiety (Du-Plat Jones, 2006), self-harm (Sansone & Weideman, 2007), insomnia (Walker et al., 2011), and pain related disorders such as fibromyalgia (Logan et al., 2002). In terms of physical health conditions they found negative impacts on respiratory health, increased likelihood of musculoskeletal conditions, cardiovascular disorders, diabetes, and gastrointestinal symptoms (Schei et al., 2006). Substance misuse is recounted as one of the most frequently reported health problems in women and is also an issue of note in male participants (Campbell, 2002; Coker et al., 2002). Finally, in the same review, Dillon et al (2002) suggest that there is a dose-response relationship between severity and frequency between IPV and depression, PTSD, anxiety, and suicidal ideation. Longitudinal studies have shown similar patterns to those found in cross-sectional studies and this agreement in findings across differing methodologies highlights evidence to support the notion that a history of IPV precedes poor mental health outcomes that may persist even after the individual has left the relationship or the violence has ceased.

### **1.3 The Prevalence of Family Violence in Aotearoa New Zealand**

Radford (2017) described the difficulties in attaining accurate estimates of the real magnitude of family violence, and the discussion regarding the reliability of data when considering the drastically different patterns and rates reported in the literature is still a topic of considerable controversy. Martin et al (2006) identified that reporting of assault (type, severity, chronicity etc) varies significantly according to the assessment employed.

What we do know is that in both Aotearoa and international contexts the numbers are likely to be underestimated. The New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey (2014/2015) reports that 76% of family violence incidents are not reported to Police. The General Safety Survey conducted by Statistics Canada finds similar results in reporting, whereby only 36% of the women surveyed, called the police during or after an incident of partner violence (Statistics Canada, 2006). When children or young people are asked about their experience of violence, 40% report witnessing at least one violent act by a parent (Martin et al., 2006); whereas only 3% of mothers in the Growing Up in New Zealand study reported that their children regularly witness parental arguments (including physical altercations).

There are a number of potential reasons for this discrepancy, much of which can be explained by methodological differences across studies concerning their research design, participant samples, and the nature of questions in measures. This also illustrates that there are a multitude of issues involved in adequately assessing the nature and extent of family violence, as well as the reporting of family violence to social and legal professionals for intervention. Many children who experience violence are vulnerable and living in fear of the perpetrator and deem the risk of reporting the violence to be too great. Stigma, shame, and cultural influences also may operate in supporting, maintaining, or accepting violence, especially in cultural groups which place high value on family honour and status (United Nations, 2006). Mothers may feel ashamed about their children experiencing any form of family violence. Equally, there may be apprehension from mothers in reporting family violence incidents. This may be due to their parenting coming under the spotlight of child protection services, with fear of their children being removed from their care.

Internationally, societal acceptance (or the response to) family violence differs. In some cultures, or countries, children, victims and perpetrators of violence hold the belief that

physical, sexual and psychological violence is inescapable, inevitable, and normal and sometimes this is reinforced or perpetuated by the systems in which they operate (United Nations, 2006). These systems may be made up of services or police that are untrustworthy or feared.

Worldwide, incidence rates of “severe physical punishment” (e.g., being hit with an object) of children ranges from 4% to 36% according to the research in the WorldSafe study (Krug et al., 2002). The United Nations Secretary General found that 80%-98% of children experience physical punishment in their homes with at least 30% reaching the severe physical punishment threshold (United Nations, 2006). In Aotearoa, Police were alerted to, or investigated a staggering 118,910 incidents of family violence in 2016. This equates to a new investigation every 5 minutes (Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit, 2017). In 2017/18, in Aotearoa, Corrections recorded over 10,000 sentences where family violence was the primary offence, and that just over a quarter (26.5%) of the current prison cohort were serving sentences that included family violence offences (Polaschek, 2016).

Current estimates suggest that between 30-65% of Aotearoa women experience physical, sexual, psychological, and/or emotional abuse in their lifetime (New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, 2017). Te Rito, the New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy (2002), reported on common and consistent themes throughout their synthesis of Aotearoa family violence statistics. They found that victims of family violence are predominantly women and children with the perpetrators being predominantly male (Te Rito, 2002). However, studies have reported that IPV victimization has the strongest association with perpetration (Okuda et al., 2015; Whitaker et al., 2007), suggesting that IPV is perpetrated by both males and females and that it may be more helpful to focus on relational components as the fundamental factor feeding violence rather than simply



gender (Whitaker et al., 2007). Additionally, there is a significant overlap between male perpetration of violence against female victims and co-occurring child abuse and neglect (Polaschek, 2016; FVDRC , 2017). Finally, the FVDRC found that the violence is definitively acknowledged as, more often than not, a deliberate act used by perpetrators as a means of asserting authority, power, and control over others (FVDRC , 2017).

Some reports claim that family violence is an issue that knows no bounds and impacts families from all cultures, socio-economic circumstances and backgrounds (Te Rito, 2003; Hoeata, 2011; Morrison & Davenne, 2016). Conflicting research indicates time and again that there are populations that are significantly more vulnerable to experiencing violence and crime in the community, as well as within their family (Slabber, 2012; Understanding Family Violence, 2017). Te Puni Kōkiri (The Ministry of Māori Development) released a report in 2017 titled “Understanding Family Violence: Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand”. In short, the statistics show that Māori are overrepresented in both perpetration and victimisation of not only family violence but also crime in general. Māori are twice as likely to have committed a serious crime against a family member, Māori children are 6 times more likely to die from child abuse or neglect, and Māori students are twice as likely as New Zealand European students to report witnessing adults hitting children in their homes (Te Rito, 2017). This is of particular importance for the current research, because whilst there is clear evidence of overrepresentation in these negative outcomes, there is a dearth in culturally appropriate means of intervening.

#### **1.4 Whānau Violence: An important distinction**

In light of the above statistics regarding Māori and family violence, Māori researchers and academics have called for an important distinction to be made between family and whānau violence definitions. Moreover, the ‘epidemic’ rates of family violence

within Māori communities has engendered strong motivation for culturally responsive initiatives that work towards restoring whānau. Kruger et al (2004) state that “whānau violence” (p. 8) is the only sufficient way of describing violence in Māori families and that using ‘family violence’ and ‘whānau violence’ interchangeably is incorrect and indicates that the concept of whānau is not well understood. To clarify, whānau does not directly translate to the Pākehā equivalent of the typical nuclear, biological family. Whānau is a layered term which is encompassed in the Māori and tribal worldview, meaning there are integral “rights, responsibilities and obligations that come with whānau” (p.9). Fundamentally, when whānau is ruptured by violence it impacts not simply the dyad involved, but hapu and iwi, which in turn is propelled forward intergenerationally. Kruger et al (2004) states “the presence or absence [of violence] is indicative of the state of wellbeing or dis-ease of whānau, hapu and iwi.” (p. 9).

Wellbeing, both individually and within whānau is also conceptualised differently for Māori, and this needs to be considered in order to appropriately report on the impact of whānau violence. For Māori, there are several terms for wellbeing; Dobbs et al. (2014) created the Mauri Ora framework in order to recognise and conceptualise wellbeing in the context of the whānau violence intervention landscape. The authors utilised the following definition from the work of Kruger et al (2004); “Mauri ora is one of a number of Māori terms for wellbeing/wellness of both the collective and the individual. It is regarded as the maintenance of balance between wairua (spiritual wellbeing), hinengaro (intellectual wellbeing), ngākau (emotional wellbeing) and tinana (physical wellbeing)” (p. 15). When wellbeing is understood in this way, the notion that violence disrupts these experiences and damages wellbeing at the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical level can be understood fully (Kruger, et al., 2004). Additionally, when whānau have been ruptured by

violence the typical approach to intervention involves individual, or couple-based responses, or separation of the perpetrator, and discounts the value of restoring the balance in the whānau (Dobbs et al., 2014). This in turn means the process becomes disconnected from the collective responsibilities and obligations of whānau members, further disenfranchising members, including both perpetrator and victim, and disrupting the collective identity of whānau, hapu, and iwi (Kruger et al, 2009). Further consideration of the cultural, philosophical, political, historical and social contexts in which Māori exist follows in subsequent sections of this research.

### **1.5 The Dynamics, Theories, and Predictors of Perpetration and Victimisation.**

The literature on family violence and IPV theories over the last 100 years is peppered with a range of explanations for why some people use violence and how they are quantifiably and qualitatively different from those who do not. Unfortunately, as Ali and Naylor (2013) explain, the field is still lacking a succinct account of the literature and a plausible, inclusive and applicable theory. However, given the possible heterogeneity in family systems, and the dynamic nature of family violence across all its forms, which is linked to predictors across multiple ecological contexts, it would seem that any inclusive theory is bound to be complex. Chornesky (2000) identified four theoretical explanations for family violence, including; feminist, psychological, sociological, and neurobiological theories. The author then examined and divided these into more distinctive explanations including; violence as a product of ineffective communication skills, poor emotional regulation, attachment dysfunction, male shame, intergenerational transmission of violent behaviour, psychopathology and personality disorders and substance misuse.

#### ***1.5.1 Social Learning Theory and the Intergenerational Transmission of Violence***

A recurrent theme throughout the family violence literature is the longer-term adjustment of children exposed to family violence and the positive association with future violence perpetration (Cameranesi & Piotrowski, 2020; Fergusson et al., 2006). The concept of violence begetting violence was initially discussed by Curtis (1963) who researched the backgrounds of violent convicted murderers and found that a large proportion of these men had experienced violence in their childhood. Understanding whether and how experiencing violence in early life increases the risk of later use of, or victimisation through IPV has continued to be of sustained interest. The understanding of when, how, and why family violence becomes intergenerational and what factors maintain violent behaviour or victimisation helps to inform practice and intervention.

Earlier research by Whitfield et al. (2003) endeavoured to understand the developmental trajectories of people using and experiencing violence. Utilising the Adverse Childhood Experiences Study the researchers attempted to understand the relationship between three subtypes of childhood violent experiences (physical and/or sexual abuse and witnessing maternal battering) and risk of adult IPV perpetration or victimisation. Previous research using this data has strongly suggested that experiencing abuse and a chaotic home environment (including trauma or adversity) has a multitude of deleterious social and health outcomes (Whitfield et al., 2003). Results indicated that participants exposed to any of the three subtypes of violence were at a substantively higher risk of either becoming a perpetrator (men) or a victim (women) of IPV. Whitfield et al. (2003) also found that both men and women had strong graded relationships between the number of violent experiences and the risk of experiencing or perpetrating violence.

Cameranesi and Piotrowski (2020) describe social learning theory as grounded in the notion that early life experiences within the family/whānau system are the most

fundamental foundation of learning. This is the context in which children learn about relationships which are modelled and reinforced by both parents and siblings, including observational learning of aggressive and harmful behaviour. Ehrensaft et al's. (2003) longitudinal study illustrated that childhood exposure to violence between parents was the second strongest predictor of later IPV. Many other, more recent studies also highlight the association between exposure to IPV in childhood and later maladaptive attitudes and expectations which are favourable or accepting of violence in intimate relationships (Howell et al., 2012; Lee et al, 2016; Temple et al, 2013). Interestingly, Stith et al's. (2000) meta-analysis reports only a weak-to-moderate significant relationship between the two variables. Moreover, several further studies in their evaluation of the empirical evidence in support of social learning theory mirrored Stith's research finding mixed results in regard to magnitude and stability of effect sizes (Pratt et al, 2015; Zavala, 2016; Eriksson, 2015).

Although a relationship between early exposure to violence and later perpetration of violence seems like simple logic, the literature as it stands is plagued by several fundamental limitations, namely the role of confounding social and contextual factors such that interparental violence is more common in family contexts in which multiple dysfunctional features are also present (Dardis, 2015). These confounding factors include parental alcohol and drug abuse, poverty and social disadvantage, limited parental education, and parental criminality (Lawson, 2012; Pratt et al, 2015).

Fergusson et al's (2006) 25-year longitudinal study examined the extent to which reported exposure to family violence prior to 16 years of age was associated with later perpetration and victimisation of IPV after controlling for other risk factors experienced over the life-course. This research indicated that interparental violence was much more common in families that were experiencing a range of ecological challenges including socio-economic

disadvantage, family dysfunction, child physical and sexual abuse, and impaired parental bonding. The results also showed that when controlling for these early risk factors “exposure to interparental violence in childhood was not related to increased rates of involvement in subsequent IPV or violent crime” (Fergusson et al, 2006, p. 103). This suggests that previous studies had not adequately considered the role of life-course experiences and points to a cumulative risk perspective for understanding the potential of family violence perpetration.

In the rigorous empirical testing of the social learning model of intergenerational transmission of IPV it is common to see weak-to-moderate associations between exposure to violence and later perpetration/victimisation (Pratt et al, 2015; Zavala, 2016; Eriksson, 2015). Stith et al. (2000) report that this association tends to decline even more after controlling for confounding factors. Whilst a proportion of the literature supports the notion that there is a reliable relationship between these factors, it may be more valuable to focus on the early developmentally salient risk factors and their potential to mediate the increase or decrease in later IPV perpetration/victimisation. In doing this, it offers the opportunity to look towards a more general understanding that recognises family violence as being one of a series of accumulated childhood adversities and risk factors that tend to co-occur. This also highlights the importance of broader societal issues such as economic stress, parental mental health, access to education and parental drug and alcohol misuse and the short-term and long-term adjustment of the children living in these homes.

As described, the intergenerational transmission of violence is a logical explanation for the continuity of soaring family violence statistics. This explanation is often rationalised and stated to be theoretically underpinned by Bandura’s (1977) social learning theory which posits that “children learn through direct and behavioural conditioning and by imitating the

behaviour they have observed or seen reinforced in others” (Stith et al., 2000, p. 640).

However, this theory is not without its critiques or critics. Cameranesi and Piotrowski (2020) highlight the theories weak empirical substantiation, low explanatory power (the idea that some children exposed to IPV do not go on to show externalising behaviours), and importantly it has a low range of applicability only accounting for externalising behaviours. Dutton (2017) describes that the mechanisms involved in observational learning may not be the best explanation for the intergenerational transmission of violence. In the authors earlier research, Dutton (2002) postulated that there is a further connective mechanism; that the psychobiological profile of the perpetrator increases the likelihood of emotional reactivity rather than a violent action being a learned response. The psychobiological profile is considered a result of early abuse victimisation, leading perpetrators to have more chronic anger, anxiety and trauma responses when psychologically aroused. This explanation is more consistent with personality or attachment theories of violence rather than simply a pure behavioural vicarious learning exercise.

### **1.5.2 Attachment**

Attachment theory offers an interesting view of individuals who use violence as it conceptualises the life-long impacts of early parent-child relationships and how these experiences can persist into adulthood. Attachment theory, more generally, is interested in the proximity seeking behaviour of an infant towards its primary caregiver, most specifically in situations which arouse distress for the child (Bowlby, 1973). The responsivity and sensitivity of said caregiver, as well as the consistency and predictability of the caregiver’s response is of fundamental importance in the development of a healthy and adaptive attachment relationship as well as aspects of emotion regulation and physiology. Bowlby (1973) postulated that “attachment behaviour is held to characterise human beings from

the cradle to the grave” (p.203). In this vein, attachment bonds develop and continue to be modified throughout the many stages of development; infancy through childhood to adolescence and adulthood. Bowlby believed that via this relationship a range of expectations were developed about oneself, and that overtime these expectations would also apply to one’s relationship with intimate partners. This self-reference is referred to as the ‘internal working model’ and includes feelings, beliefs and expectations about how one sees themselves in the context of relationships. The internal working model reflects the extent to which individuals believe themselves worthy of safe love and attention, whilst also encapsulating the individual’s expectations of the response from others. For example, does the individual’s internal working model inherently hold relationships as safe and supportive, or has the individual learned that if they reach out they are likely to be responded to with rejection or even threatening and frightful behaviour (Ponti & Tani, 2019).

As interest in the long-term applicability of attachment theory piqued, subsequent research unveiled that attachment patterns in adult relationships took a similar shape to those postulated in the parent-child realm. What was also established, which is particularly relevant to the current study, is that several authors found that romantic and intimate relationships are the most significant attachment relationships in adult life (Hazen & Zeifman, 1994; Shaver & Hazen, 1993; Riggs, 2010). When the theory of attachment is applied to the perpetration and victimisation of IPV and family/whānau violence, the parent-child relationship can be understood as the prototype for future relationships. If these early relationships are characterised by fear, inconsistent, frightening, rejecting or neglectful parenting this is likely to create an internal working model whereby intimate relationships are internalised as consistent with these characteristics (Ponti & Tani, 2019). Research indicates that both male and female perpetrators of violence are more likely to



have preoccupied, fearful, or anxious/dismissing attachment styles and that these styles act as a behavioural framework that influences behavioural patterns over their lives (Dutton et al, 1994; Wilson et al., 2013; Velotti et al., 2018). This is likely because according to attachment theory an individual's internal working model is incorporated into their developing personality structure, which influences later social relations independent from the family of origin (Bowlby, 1973). Godbout (2009) explained that children exposed to IPV are in a position where their basic attachment needs are less likely to be fulfilled, therefore the potential for the development of a negative internal working model is higher and the child grows up dealing with their attachment figure as a potential threat or source of danger.

Riggs (2010) presented a more recent understanding of how childhood emotional abuse impacts attachment across the lifespan and offers a conceptual model, grounded in attachment theory (see Figure 1 below). This model is helpful in understanding the multitude of factors implicated in the research of attachment, IPV, and use of violence in the family/whānau. This model highlights the impact of emotionally abusive parenting which is characterised by rejection, frightening parenting, hostile and frightened parenting (i.e., the main caregiver is a victim of violence themselves). Once the child develops an insecure attachment style via these parenting practices, their long-term development is likely to be hindered by an increased propensity towards emotional dysregulation, negative working models of self and others, poor coping responses, disrupted social functioning and peer relationships, and psychological distress. Riggs described how these factors act as pathways which culminate in issues within adult relationships, as well as resulting in caregiving and caretaking difficulties. The author states that “without intervention at some point, the cycle may repeat itself in the next generation when adult attachment insecurity,

emotional disturbance, and poor marital relations negatively affect parenting behaviour, potentially resulting in emotionally abusive behaviour toward offspring” (Riggs, 2010, p. 7-8).

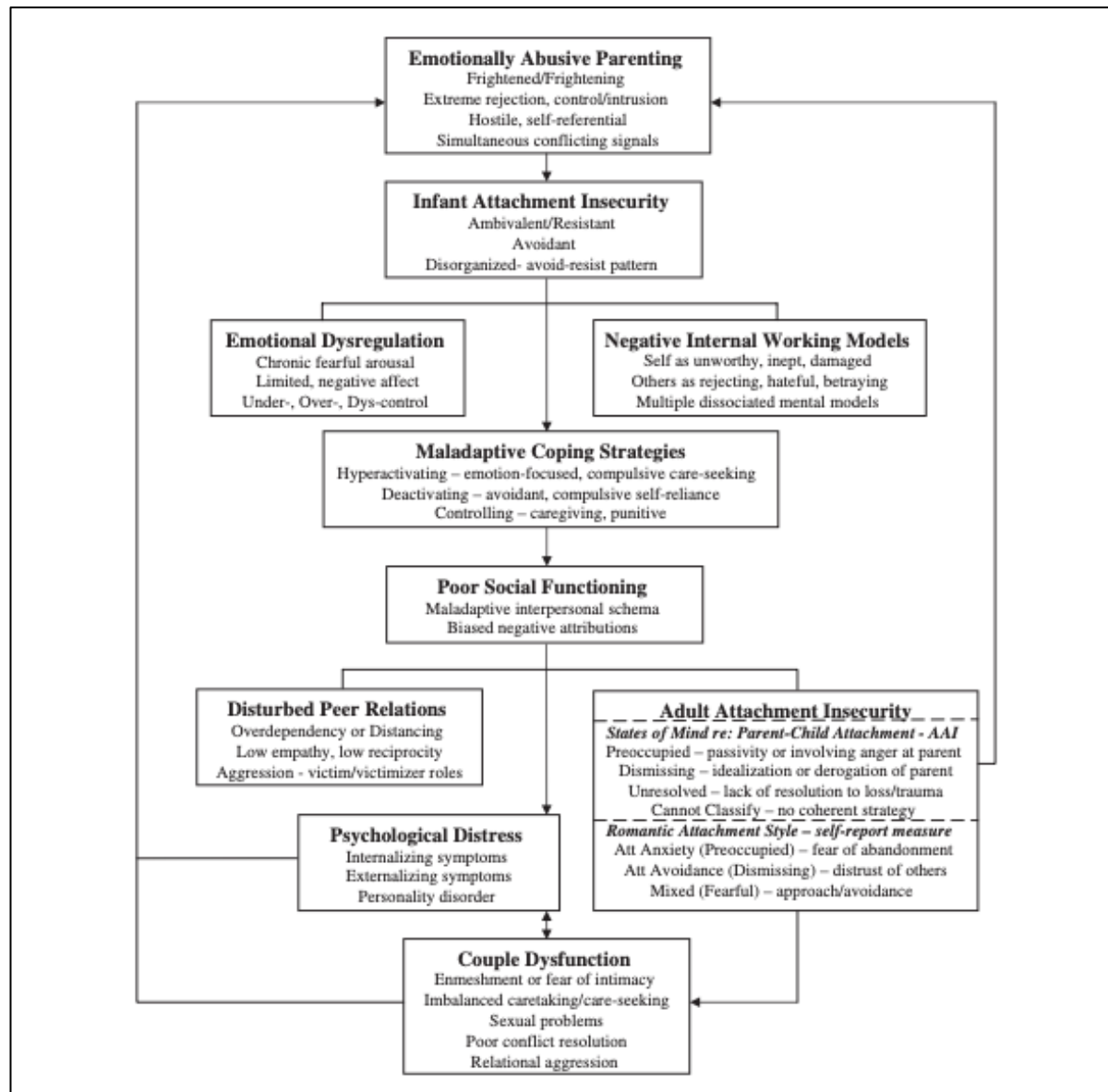


Figure 1.1: Riggs (2010) Hypothesised hierarchical regression models for relationship adjustment, psychological aggression, and psychological victimisation.

The literature finds a consistent relationship between childhood exposure to IPV and the formation of insecure or disorganised attachment and indicates that this attachment

pattern persists into adulthood. Furthermore, multiple studies confirm that secure attachment is a significant protective factor against IPV perpetration (Park, 2016; Velotti, 2018; Wilson et al, 2013; Dutton et al. 1994; Mauricio, 2002; Roberts & Noller 1998). Research indicates that attachment style is associated to relationship quality, (i.e., when both partners are securely attached, they report higher relationship functioning (Park, 2016; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; Wilson, 2013). When couples are securely attached, research shows they are more likely to have greater communication and conflict resolution skills in conjunction with higher reported relationship satisfaction (Wilson, 2013; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Moreover, there is also an indication that an insecure attachment style operates as a distinct risk factor for involvement in the perpetration of IPV (Wilson, 2013; Babcock, 2000) and the use of violence more generally (Ogilvie et al., 2014). Bookwala and Zdaniuk (1998) propose, and as Riggs (2010) model would suggest, that there are multiple mechanisms at play, including conflict management and resolution deficits, affect regulation difficulties, factors relating to psychological distress, and cognitive styles which pose an increased risk for perpetrating varying forms of abuse including IPV and family/whānau violence. For example, Mauricio et al. (2007) argues that individuals with an anxious attachment style have a tendency to feel that their partners are withdrawn or unapproachable and, therefore, they respond with anger, controlling or manipulative behaviours with the purpose of maintaining the relationship. As previously described, insecure anxious subtypes are characterised as hyperaware and sensitive to rejection, and have a fear of abandonment. Therefore, maladaptive behaviours are used as a means to maintain perceived closeness or security with their partner, be it in controlling or violent behaviour (Allison et al, 2008). Whereas, Wilson et al (2014) propose that when a partner is securely attached, they are more likely to respond to their partner constructively, and have

the capacity to validate their partner's emotions, even in times of conflict or increased stress.

There are several key strengths of attachment theory when applying it to IPV and child abuse. Firstly, it follows a developmental trajectory, providing a robust perspective on the learned and internalised interpersonal relationship dynamics. Second, it is supported widely by empirical evidence and holds sound intervention applicability at both the individual and family/whānau level (Cameranesi & Piotowski, 2020). Nevertheless, Cameranesi and Piotowski (2020) identify several limitations regarding attachment theory's explanatory scope, including the fact that it does not acknowledge the contribution of important contextual factors, such as the exposure to stressors and one's social environment. Feminist scholars have also critiqued the weight placed on the mother-child relationship dyad, believing that this encourages or leads to mother blaming.

The current study is directly interested in the experiences of fathers who use violence, and although attachment theory cannot provide a complete understanding, it does offer useful grounds for the analysis of the potential pathways to violence. Moreover, understanding the implications of negative internal working models, maladaptive coping strategies, and couple dysfunction as presented by Riggs (2010) allows for further analysis regarding specific elements necessary for effective intervention.

### ***1.5.3 Psychopathology, personality and perpetrator typologies***

**Psychopathology and personality.** Early theories related to family violence postulated that the core mechanism of violence perpetration and victimisation was psychopathological in orientation (Ali & Naylor, 2013). Much of this earlier research was criticized for the methodologies utilised, whereby studies often lacked a control group or simply reported percentages of the mental health diagnoses in violent male inmate

samples. Heru (2007) reported that at that time there was no research that had uncovered a causal relationship between psychopathology and violence. The theory fails to account for the reason why the majority of people with psychopathology do not use violence towards others, why people who do not experience psychopathology do use violence, and ignores the influence of cultural norms, societal attitudes, and structural inequality.

Dutton et al. (1996) highlight the utility of understanding psychopathology and personality characteristics of violent samples as it provides contextual information regarding “the constellation of individual factors associated with abuse in intimate relationships” (p. 327). These factors are important to understand, because, much like the theory regarding attachment, it facilitates insight into possible directions for intervention. An area of interest is where personality traits become dysfunctional, and when these dysfunctional traits intersect with family violence or IPV. Ali and Naylor (2013) share that much of the personality research focusses on the borderline personality organisation (BPO) because of its prevalence in samples of abusive men. Research highlights both the disproportionality high prevalence rates of personality dysfunction in offending populations as well prevalence specifically of borderline personality disorder (BPD; Ross & Babcock, 2009; Okuda et al, 2015). This orientation is characterised by the proclivity for intense, and unstable interpersonal relationships, an unstable sense of self or self-continuity, an intolerance of being alone, fear of abandonment, and a tendency toward intense anger and impulsivity (Dutton, 2006).

Attachment and personality development are also interlinked, whereby attracting a diagnosis of BPD is much more likely in those who have grown up in early invalidating environments which are significantly more likely to also be characterised by a disrupted or insecure attachment relationship with their primary caregiver. Dutton (2006) emphasizes

the centrality of BPO traits in abusive men based on their research, which unearthed consistencies between central traits of BPO (anger, jealousy and blaming others) and the associated features of abusiveness.

The literature also highlights a strong link between disrupted attachment and impulsiveness, as well as BPD and Antisocial Personality Disorder (APD). Edwards et al (2003) investigated the relationships between impulsiveness, aggression, personality disorder, and IPV and found that each variable was correlated with IPV. Later research by Fowler and Westen (2011) and others (Dowgwillo et al., 2016; Ross & Babcock, 2009) found similar results when investigating the relationship between pathological personality factors and relationship violence. In the Edwards et al. (2003) study, impulsive aggression was found to be one of the greatest predictors of violence ( $r = .402$ ), whilst the presence of a high score on a PD scale, either Borderline ( $r = .454$ ) or Antisocial ( $r = .437$ ) was the strongest predictor of self-reported IPV. Impulsiveness and Antisocial Personality Disorders (APD) did not vary between groups, indicating that APD is likely a predictor of general criminal behaviour rather than IPV. Other studies indicate a range of consistent psychopathological issues were present in regard to perpetrators of IPV, most notably BPD, APD, several anxiety disorders, and major depressive disorder (Kessler et al., 2001; Edwards et al., 2003).

Whilst it is not in the scope of the current research to examine each personality disorder and each individual psychological disorder, it is clear that men specifically who use violence are significantly more likely to experience both personality and psychological disturbances which are likely to impact on both interpersonal and day-to-day functioning. Understanding this in the context of the research regarding violence within family/whānau relationships, highlights that individuals also are likely to be experiencing a range of other

life stressors, many of which also interact with personality dysfunction and further impact relationships and their ability to be able to manage negative emotion.

**Perpetrator typologies.** The typology perspective to understanding of family/whānau violence considers that there are core subtypes (typologies, groups, or cohorts) within the group of men who use violence towards their partner or children, and that these typologies are discrete and quantifiably different from one other despite sharing the same behavioural problem of using violence. Cavanaugh and Gelles (2005) state, “One of the questions to be examined is not only what kind of batterer program works, but what works, for which types of men, and under what circumstances” (p. 157). This quote highlights that if batterer typologies are valid ways of understanding individual differences across types of perpetrators, then a one-size-fits-all approach to intervention may be ineffective (Stith et al, 2004). Typologies can be conceptualised and identified in a number of different ways, with generally between two and four subtypes identified based on perpetrator psychopathology and how violence is used (Capaldi & Kim, 2007). Gottman et al. (1995) focussed on the physiological response of the participants (men) during problem-solving discussions with their partner, whilst other studies have focused on motivations for the use of violence (Chase et al., 2001), or the psychological profiling of behaviours (Holtzworth-Munro and Stuart, 1994).

Holtzworth-Munro and Stuart (1994) conducted an early review of the literature and from this proposed a trimodal model that represented the most consistent constellation of perpetrators. More commonly these typologies are derived utilising cluster analysis based on scores from the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory (Tweed & Dutton, 1998; White & Gondolf, 2000; Hamberger et al, 1996). The trimodal model includes (a) family only, (b) dysphoric/borderline, and (c) generally violent/antisocial” (Holtzworth-Munro, 1994, p.

481). These were characterised along three dimensions; whether the participants experienced psychopathology, whether the violence was general or specific to the family, and frequency/severity of the violence (Capaldi & Kim, 2007). As suggested, family only batterers limit their problem behaviour to the home, they also use violence in the least severe manner, and are the least likely to have personality disorders and criminal convictions. Other typology researchers might refer to this group as *hitters* (Mott-McDonald Associates, 1979), *infrequent batterers* (Sweeny & Key, 1982), and *batterers with no clinical elevations on the MMPI scales* (Flournoy & Wilson, 1991). The dysphoric/borderline subgroup are characterised by their experience of psychological distress and emotional volatility which are much like borderline and schizoid personality characteristics, as well as engaging in moderate to severe violence including both psychological and sexual abuse. Some violence outside of the family may be evident and the literature may refer to this subtype as *emotionally volatile batterers* (Saunders, 1992), *schizoid/ borderline batters* (Hamberger and Hastings, 1986), and *hostile pursuers* (Stith & Farley, 1993), *group of batterers with elevations on every MMPI scale* (Hale et al.'s, 1988). This group is thought to be the most prevalent making up approximately 50% of the three subgroups (Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994). Finally, the violent/antisocial group also engages in moderate to severe marital violence which also includes psychological and sexual abuse. They are most likely to have problems with drugs and alcohol misuse, have more callous unemotional traits, and be diagnosed or align behaviourally with antisocial personality disorder. Researchers have also coined this subgroup *frequently violent men* (Sweeny & Key, 1982), *generally violent men* (Sheilds et al., 1988), *narcissistic/antisocial subgroup* (Hamberger and Hastings, 1986), or *antisocial and sociopathic batterers* (Stith & Farley., 1993).



Whilst there are a number of characteristics of typologies that are still contested in regard to their reliability and utility, there are several studies which show support for the three-group typology and its utility in clinical and treatment settings (Hamberger et al, 1996; Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2000; Tweed & Dutton 2000; Waltz et al, 2000). The typology approach offers several key insights; firstly, that differing typologies may merit differing treatment modalities (White & Gondolf, 2000). Secondly, they have provided detail and clarification of the heterogenous nature of IPV, contributing to our understanding of the intersection between personality, psychopathology and IPV. Lastly, Gottman et al. (1995) proposes that typology research may facilitate a better understanding of the etiological mechanisms of IPV, which is an important element of decreasing violence statistics.

#### ***1.5.4 Sociological Theories of Intimate Partner and Family Violence***

Each of the theoretical models reviewed above attempted to understand the causes of family violence by explicitly taking a psychological focus on the mental, emotional, and behavioural characteristics of perpetrators. This, by nature, focusses more specifically on individual factors and is often criticised for ignoring, or not adequately representing, the wider environmental factors as part of the analysis. In contrast to these perspectives are sociological explanations of IPV and CAN, whereby violent behaviour is conceptualised as a symptom of a patriarchal and misogynistic society and social structure, rather than a rationale which conceptualises violence as individual psychopathology or personality dysfunction (Lawson, 2012). There are two main schools of thought which drive sociological theories of IPV and family violence; the first is gender-based and focusses on how partner violence is “an expression of gender-based domination of women by men” (Lawson, 2012, p. 572), the second relates to the environmental and societal structures one inhabits and

how this contributes to the use of violence within the family. Here I focus on a key theory from each school; feminist theory and ecological theory respectively.

**Feminist Perspectives.** The feminist theory of family violence is one of the more dominant and enduring theoretical perspectives. This perspective is influential because movements such as the Women's Liberation Movement fought to bring the world's attention to the disturbing statistics of violence against women in the early 1970s (Ali & Naylor, 2013b). This resulted in the establishment of women's shelters, an influx in perpetrator interventions, and fundamental changes to legislative agendas (McPhail et al, 2007). Moreover, as Polaschek (2016) describes, feminist theory substantially contributes to the fundamental components regarding the response to perpetrators. For example, early programmes were grounded in the belief that antisocial beliefs, patriarchal attitudes/beliefs about women and children, and overvaluing of men were core components that needed to be challenged in intervention. What underpins feminist perspectives is the central view that IPV is a "result of male oppression of women within a patriarchal system in which men are the primary perpetrators of violence and women the primary victims" (McPhail et al, 2007, p. 818). Therefore, early works relating to this perspective dictated that it is a gender issue and that gender is the central component of analysis (Walker, 2017; Dobash & Dobash, 1979).

Dobash and Dobash (1979), in their seminal work emphasise that the long-standing cultural legacy of male subordination, ownership of (in the context of slavery and historical legal status), and patriarchal domination over women is perpetuated and maintained through what they call *wife abuse*. Whilst this issue is a legacy of centuries past, this perspective also proposes the key maintaining factor of contemporary IPV is male entitlement via the socialisation of men. Miedzian (1991) shares that this led to the implicit

understanding that what can be learned can be unlearned and that this was the foundation for the “how” of changing IPV statistics. This includes challenging male entitlement, holding men accountable both legally, morally, and publicly and to influence the social, cultural, and political influences at the policy level (McPhail et al., 2007). Feminist theory has endured because the original ideological tenets live on, through the continued disruption of patriarchal society and through the current interventions which serve to challenge and reimagine male socialisation. However, more recent research regarding the theory is sparse and it is less often used in the study of family violence.

Feminist theory has been explicitly challenged by important schools of thought, namely, family violence theory. It too is in contrast to the previously mentioned theories which tend to focus on the individual, psychopathology and experiences during critical periods of development. Much of the critiques centre around the knowledge that females, as mentioned, also use violence at equivalent or slightly higher rates (Ali & Naylor, 2013), that violence occurs in non-heterosexual relationships, and that there is limited evidence to suggest gender is the main cause of violence within relationships when controlling for other influences. Feminist theorists defend their stance by stating the importance of fear within relationships where bi-directional violence exists, stating that the same level of fear and potential for injury does not occur equally, whereby men are able to assert more physical dominance and therefore do more physical harm (McPhail et al, 2007).

**Family Violence Perspectives.** Stith et al (2000) conducted a meta-analytic review and investigated risk factors relating to intimate partner physical abuse perpetration and physical abuse. The authors utilised both Dutton’s (1995) and Belsky’s (1980) ecological models. This research endeavoured to uncover which factors were most strongly associated with IPV. The results indicated that effect sizes were largest at the microsystem and

ontogenic system. The effect sizes related to the exosystem indicated that the more distal the system, the less influential it is on the risk of perpetration and victimisation of family violence (Stith et al., 2000). Both the microsystem and ontogenic systems however, did not differ significantly from one another in relationship to intimate partner violence. This indicates that the family environment (microsystem) may have a similar influence as the ontogenic system or “the forces at work of the individual” (Belsky, 1980, p. 320), and it is likely that the interaction between these two systems is also implicated. Ultimately, this model has facilitated, in part, the movement away from the identification of singular risk factors and conceptualising the relationship and interactions between variables. More recent studies utilising the ecological model highlighted the continued use of both Bronfenbrenner (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) and Dutton’s (1995) conceptualisation of ecological theory indicating its continued prominence in its area of interest (e.g., Smith Slep et al., 2020; O’Leary et al., 2007; Capaldi et al., 2005). Smith Slep et al (2020) also report the importance of understanding and acknowledging wider factors outside of the individual despite the continued focus on changing individual characteristics via intervention. This may indicate a potential weighting or preference towards personality, psychopathology and typology perspectives.

In contrast to the feminist perspective, and aligning with a systems perspective is the Family Violence Perspective which views conflict in the context of the family system rather than simply the dyadic relationship between partners. It proposes that individuals within the family are intricately connected (Murray, 2006) and is less interested in the other systems outside of the microsystem, In this light, it also posits that conflict within families is “universal and inevitable” (Straus, 1973, p. 105) and is, in part, a selected strategy utilised by the family member to resolve the conflict (Lawson, 2012). This perspective also contrasts

previously mentioned explanations of IPV, asserting that violence is not the result of personality dysfunction, purest social learning or individual pathology, and that the *unit of analysis* is the family structure and the interactions that occur within this structure, rather than any on individual (i.e., victim or perpetrator). Murray (2006) explains that family systems, like other social systems, respond to either positive or negative feedback and this perspective pays particular interest to the reciprocal influences within the family/whānau. For example, in applying this to the family violence context, negative feedback would diminish further violent and positive feedback is likely to increase or intensify violence (Lawson, 2012). This theory aims to capture the complexity of social behaviour, and posits that this approach facilitates understanding around how positive and negative feedback within the system can escalate into violence (Giles-Sims, 1983). The characteristics of the family system (stress-level, quality and quantity of time spent together, and socialisation) impact the likelihood of violent or nonviolent means of managing conflict. An interesting thought regarding these characteristics is understanding what inherently impacts the family system. The nested ecological approach captures these factors as well as aims to delineated how family-level factors (microsystem) interacts with both person level (ontogenic) and wider societal influences (exosystem), whereas Family Violence Perspectives are mostly interested in the family factors that cause violent and nonviolent conflict strategies. This theory is less commonly cited in the current literature; however, it offers valuable insight into the relational component of family violence and highlights the important factor of what maintains family violence (i.e., reinforcement contingencies).

#### **1.5.5 Social Information Processing.**

Social information Processing (SIP) is a theory which is more specifically related to parents and their violence towards their children. SIP theory is interested in the range of

complex processes and factors, most centrally cognitive components and interpersonal factors, that delineate how parent behaviour might move from adaptive to abusive (Rodriguez, 2015). This theory tries to explain the cognitive-behavioural processes of parents regarding their children. According to several authors, SIP is one of the leading models utilised in attempting to understand parents' risk to employ harmful parenting behaviours, including child abuse and physical discipline (Rodriquez, 2020; Rodriguez et al, 2019; Milner, 2000). SIP is grounded in the notion that parents process information from any new parent-child interaction in the context of the parents pre-existing beliefs about the child and about discipline (Rodriquez, 2020). These beliefs are described as pre-existing cognitive schemas and are the central component of this theory (Milner, 2000; Rodreguez, 2015).

Milner (2000) delineated a four stage model of SIP that can result in harsh parenting behaviours (child abuse and physical discipline). Stage one involves the perception of the situation, taking into account the distractions and interfering elements of the situation. This is an important factor of this stage because the parents perception may or may not be accurate based on the number of interfering stimuli within the environment, meaning they may misconstrue the situation. Stage two is the interpretation phase whereby the parent evaluates the child's behaviour. If the parent inaccurately perceives this information, they may evaluate the child's behaviour harshly, and adopt a negative bias towards the child, as well as expectations regarding future behaviour. This negative bias is important for at-risk parents at stage three, where parents may fail to integrate and process information that would explain the child's behaviour, which decreases the likelihood the parent would select a less-harsh response. Haskett et al., (2006) share that parents who evaluate their children's behaviour as intentionally negative are more likely to be identified as abusive or to engage

in later maltreatment. Finally, stage four is the selection of response (e.g., time out, removal of privileges, physical discipline, etc.). Importantly, Rodriguez' (2020) research established that parents who engage in physical discipline encounter difficulty in monitoring their use of physical discipline over time, indicating they may not be aware of the escalation from reasonable discipline, to physical discipline, and then onto physical abuse.

The interest in the field of family violence and SIP relates to identifying and targeting factors that increase or decrease the likelihood of using violence. Rodriguez (2019) indicated that research generally supports the relationship between pre-existing schemas (cognitive and affective) and the four stages of the SIP model. For example, empathy acts as a protective factor, whereby parents who hold a pre-existing schema relating to empathy towards children are more likely to show more positive emotions towards their child (Light et al, 2009). Whereas, individuals who hold pre-existing cognitive schemas approving of parent-child aggression are more likely to engage in child abuse (McCarthy et al., 2016; Rodriguez et al., 2011). At each stage of SIP there are other processes at play which are of interest to the field of study. For example, during stage one, research proposes that factors such as emotion regulation difficulties (Hien et al., 2010; Hiraoka et al., 2016) and poor frustration tolerance (Rodriguez, 2017) decrease the parents ability to accurately perceive the situation resulting in a heightened risk of utilising harmful parenting strategies. Lundahl (2006) and Prinz (2016) found that when parents have more awareness of nonphysical discipline alternatives they are less likely to engage in aggressive parenting practices. In contrast, Rodriguez et al (2018) found that changes in understanding of nonphysical discipline alternatives did *not* significantly predict reductions in parent-child aggression risk for mothers or fathers. Currently, offering nonphysical discipline strategies is one of the

most widely utilised goals of prevention programmes, indicating the need for further investigation into its ability to reduce risk (Lundahl, 2006).

Rodriguez (2015) argued that the field has “virtually no consideration of the model with fathers” (p.8), however, it does have support for the model with mothers. In a later study, Rodriguez et al (2020) endeavoured to investigate the longitudinal predictive ability of the SIP model in a sample of new mothers and fathers. The findings largely highlighted that parent-child aggression risk was predicted by pathways involving pre-existing schemas for both fathers and mothers. Moreover, Rodriguez et al (2018) acknowledged that parenting schemas are fundamental to this theory, *and* that these schemas operate in the broader context of a parent’s life. They propose that factors such as personal vulnerabilities and life experiences tax the parent’s ability to parent effectively. Their prospective longitudinal study investigated mothers’ and fathers’ SIP parenting schemas in conjunction with the two aforementioned factors in a sample of 203 primiparous mothers and their partners (of which 86% participated;  $n=151$ ). The results showed that most of the proposed factors were significant predictors of parent-child aggression change over time. For fathers, change in parent-child risk was significantly predicted by increases in “approval of parent-child aggression; increases in negative child behaviour attributions; decreases in problem focused coping; increases in psychopathology symptoms; decreases in emotion regulation ability; and decreases in partner satisfaction” (p. 254). As expected, changes in parent-child aggression risk were also significantly predicted by increases in intimate partner violence victimization and decreases in social support satisfaction for mothers. These findings endorse previous research which found associations between limited social support (Tucker & Rodriguez, 2014), increased risk of parent child aggression and increased risk of IPV (Bourassa, 2007; Capaldi et al., 2009). However, these two factors did not predict changes in



fathers' parent-child aggression indicating the need for further investigation of what factors increased or decreased risk over time.

In a review of interventions for perpetrators of family violence, Polaschek (2016) highlights a common feature of intervention programmes which aligns with the principles of SIP. This feature is the cognitive-behavioural framework which posits that the underlying mechanism for violence is the individuals' distorted or maladaptive cognitions about the acceptability of violence. This perspective also includes an element of social learning which highlights how early experience can shape cognitive schemas and beliefs. The purpose of this style of intervention is to challenge old ways of being, and their accompanied maladaptive schemas, and to teach alternative and more functional behaviour. More information on interventions is detailed in the following section.

In summary, this section has presented several of the more dominant theories of IPV and family violence. Wendt (2015) describes the feminist view as the leading archetype that has influenced social and criminal justice policy in family violence over the previous three decades, explaining that this has led to much of the standard intervention modalities still widely employed in present day. This perspective has been widely critiqued for weighing its argument too heavily on the single view of gender. Although the feminist perspective is broadening its scope, it still focusses on gender, the dyadic relationship, and understanding patriarchal domination as the root cause for violence (Lawson, 2012). Many subsequent theories were born out of a dissatisfaction with this view and have further influenced the intervention landscape. For example, family violence and systems perspectives highlight a different unit of analysis and focus on relationships and interactions between people, with the ecological theory also focussing on the interactions between systems. Chalk (2008) offers a critique of the ecological theory questioning the utility of this framework outside of

understanding risk and protective factors. This is because of the multiple interactions occurring between systems (for example, depression, economic insecurity and lack of social support) which creates challenges for service providers who tend to parcel out individual issues and behaviours in order to attempt to respond to them.

In contrast, much of the literature critiques psychopathology and personality theories as too focussed on the individual without properly acknowledging the influence of systems, structures and societal norms. Other theories such as Social Learning Theory, despite the mixed results regarding its empirical efficacy in explaining IPV, have continued to be widely disseminated and understood by many as the target for intervention. Finally, the Social Processing Model is more focussed on the behaviours exerted by parents towards their children and as Rodriguez (2018) shared, is moving towards a more contextual and integrated understanding of these behaviours in order to move away from simply targeting the individual.

Finally, it is also important to consider how these theories can be understood for non-Western people, groups and contexts. Te ao Māori views an individual as imbedded within the whānau rather than, as the ecological model proposes, sitting as a central figure. Theories relating specifically to individual dysfunction also are in conflict with both te ao Māori and with the Māori conceptualisation of health which emphasises the fundamental importance of relational factors. In Aotearoa, it is essential to carefully consider te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori. As will be highlighted in subsequent sections of this chapter, Māori have their own way of understanding the reasons for whānau violence, some of which intersect with concepts described above. The fundamental importance in understanding these theories is that each of them in some way, whether large or small, have influenced the current landscape of intervention and their targets. In this regard they act as a means of

contextualising the current research which examines an intervention which is underpinned by the unique indigenous Māori worldview.

## **2 Chapter Two: Intervening with Violent Fathers**

Chapter two introduces and examines the literature regarding fathers who use violence, and the interventions that exist to curb violent behaviour, with a specific emphasis on the Aotearoa context. This exploration also acts as an introduction to the current study and its interests in culturally centred interventions for tāne Māori (Māori men).

### **2.1 Fathers and Family Violence**

The above presents a synthesis of the literature regarding definitions, prevalence and theories of family violence and IPV. It too highlights the extensive research and viewpoints that exist regarding why people use violence within their family/whānau. What is underreported and likely undervalued are the perspectives of fathers. Fathers are the principle perpetrators of IPV within families (Adhia & Jeong, 2019), therefore their experiences, perceptions, and motivations for change should be considered vital in understanding the best way to support non-violence and safe parenting/relationships. This section endeavours to highlight the experiences and perspectives of these men and will utilise this as a means for discussion in later chapters.

Only in recent years has interest piqued for researchers wanting to understand the experiences, interactions, and underlying motivations of fathers who are violent (Roguski & Gregory, 2014; Mohaupt & Duckert, 2016). This is not only because the prevalence of being exposed to and experiencing direct violence is high for children, but also because the majority of children that experience IPV are likely to continue to have some form of contact with their father (or step-father) after a family violence event (Rothman et al., 2007). Research suggests that women stay in violent relationships for an average of 8 years, and that a high proportion of women (68%) resume relationships with the perpetrator of abuse after leaving family violence shelters (Stover & Coates, 2016; Lerner & Kennedy 2000).

Moreover, research indicates that a lack of contact with fathers after an episode of IPV can produce higher psychological maladjustment when compared with children who have some form of visitation (Stover et al., 2003). This highlights an impasse of sorts, whereby research suggests it is psychologically more detrimental to prevent violent fathers from seeing their children, however, the ethical and judicial responsibility of social systems to uphold children's rights and prioritise their protection endorses the opposite.

Research on the typologies of male perpetrators of family violence shows that these men are not a homogenous group. Nevertheless, much of the literature on prevention and intervention opportunities continues to portray a rather narrow perspective of violent men (Heward-Belle, 2016), which may be a result of rightly prioritising the views and wellbeing of victims over-and-above that of perpetrators. Perel and Peled (2008) show that discourse describing fathers is restricted and generally ignores the emotional and positive aspects of fathering (Perel & Peled, 2008). It seems the risk of pigeon-holing and subsuming violent fathers into "perpetrators" is that the rich detail of the experiences of these fathers is missed, leading to a generic view of violent fathers and therefore a generic response to their behaviour. Consequently, the focus for this study is to operate from a perspective of understanding violent fathers as fathers who have layered identities, who live in multiple contexts and who simultaneously experience both privilege (likely related to gender) and potential marginalisation, which could come in the form of poverty, experiences of racism, substance use, and mental health issues. The benefits of gaining a richer and more holistic perspective of these men further informs approaches to prevention and intervention (Mohaupt, 2016; Fox & Benson, 2003).

Many studies highlight that the parenting style of men who have engaged in IPV is classified as 'traditional', meaning it is characterised as authoritarian and controlling (Veteläinen et al., 2013; Bancroft & Silverman, 2012; Adams, 1991; Mathews, 1995). Bancroft and Silverman (2012) highlight that these men expect to be obeyed unquestionably, are less able to take on-board advice and are resistant to criticism. Both Perel and Peled (2008) and Veteläinen et al. (2013) found that violent fathers justified their level of control as a means to manipulate or shape their child's behaviour, however, they also reported limited options (parenting skills/tools) to draw on in responding to parenting situations that were challenging or difficult (i.e., when perceived poor behaviour escalates). Research also indicates that mothers who experienced violence at the hands of their partner still believed their partner was 'a good father' (Eriksson & Hester, 2001) and that professionals understood these men to be capable of parenting safely (Eriksson & Hester, 2001). This suggests that some mothers, and even some professionals, acknowledge that fathers who use IPV could be competent parents, although this possibly ignores the role that violence is playing on the emotional security of the children in the home (Veteläinen et al., 2013).

Morrison and Bevan (2018) utilised a qualitative design and interviewed 48 participants who were serving sentences in New Zealand prisons for family violence offences (12 women and 36 men). The endeavour of this research was to investigate people's pathways into perpetrating family violence by exploring both the proximal and distal factors the participants believed contributed to their behaviour. The authors reported that several key themes arose from the participant narratives. Interestingly, the participants described that entering into their first serious adult relationship and the lifestyle changes

was enough pressure for initiating violent behaviour. These stressors included aspects of adult relationships such as cohabitating, coparenting, managing finances, and domestic duties. Strong underlying beliefs about traditional gender roles also surfaced as a key contributor in cases where the male participant was unable to successfully provide for their family, inducing personal shame which in turn they believed increased conflict within their relationship.

Interestingly, others described their use of IPV as an extension of entrenched violent behaviours which also operated outside of the family environment. One participant explained; “[Violence] gets you places, and it gets you things” whilst another stated “The violence is normal, the drugs is normal... how I was raised, how all my family are, generations, and generations, and generations” (Morrison & Bevan, 2018, p. 1). Many of the participants believed they had ‘inherited’ a violent nature from their parents, whilst others believed violence simply served as a function to achieve their goals or to get partners to listen and comply. Some of the participants also utilised violence as a means to shut down strong and uncomfortable emotions, particularly for those individuals who had been victims in the past. Roguski and Gregory (2014) in their research (described in detail in the present study section) note that the majority of the participants surveyed, attributed the violence they used against their families to their exposure to violence in childhood or with factors closely linked with social learning. Much like the quote above, many of their participants simply saw violence “as a natural extension of the normalisation of family violence in childhood and adolescence” and as a justifiable means to attain ones’ goals (p. v)

Interestingly, Fox and Benson’s (2003/4) research indicated that violent fathers are more likely to negatively assess their children, as well as perceive family life in more

negative terms. Research by both Cummings (1998) and Graham-Berman (1998) highlight that these negative perceptions are associated with less positive parenting techniques, including fewer expressions of positive affect, and greater instances of harsh verbal discipline and physical discipline of their children. Violent fathers tend to be described as having an exaggerated sense of entitlement, perceive their parenting to be better than that of their (ex-) partner, and have authoritarian and controlling parenting style (Perel & Peled, 2008; Bancroft & Silverman, 2012; Pennell et al., 2013). What we learn from other research on the experiences of men who use violence is that, as well as being more likely to use negative parenting strategies and tactics of power and control, they are also likely to experience feelings of “regret and sadness when they thought about how their violence might have affected their children or their relationship with their children” (Bourassa et al, 2017, p.266). In fact, 76% of the participants in this study reported these emotions, and half of the participants recognised that their violence created emotional distance between them and their children. In contrast, several studies have reported that fathers did not see their perpetration of IPV as a relevant factor when evaluating their father-child relationships (Mohaupt & Duckert, 2016; Fox & Benson, 2004; Veteläinen et al., 2013). Mohaupt and Duckert (2016) also report that the majority of their study sample (all of whom has engaged in IPV) rated themselves to be average or better than average parents. Even when feeling regret and sadness, or after reflecting on the impacts of their behaviour, many fathers still continued to expose their children to these negative behaviours.

A study by Rothman et al (2007) offers some insight into the help-seeking behaviours of fathers who use violence and found that 56% sought professional help for themselves, 43% sought professional help for their children, 42% sought professional family counselling,



38% told their children that the violence is the father's fault, and 35% talked to a friend or family member to attempt to mitigate the negative impacts on their children. Fathers also reported feeling that their children favoured their relationships with their mothers or stepmothers over-and-above their relationship with their fathers. What can be understood from these studies is that among violent fathers, there are contrasting beliefs. One group believes their violent behaviour in the home does not have an impact on their relationship with their child, another group indicates they regret their behaviour, but are unlikely to do anything proactive to mitigate the behaviour, and a third group feel regret, remorse, and are likely to both understand the impact of their behaviour on their child and their parent-child relationship, and they are also more likely to seek help.

Historically, fathers have been an implicit rather than an explicit figure in policy and practice in regard to child protection and welfare matters (Meyer, 2018). It has been recognised that the invisibility of violent fathers has made their harmful behaviour permissible by circumventing social responsibility, whereby policy and practice was consistently framed around the actions necessary to remove women and children from the harm of violent men in family relationships. The burden to maintain a child's safety rested almost solely on the mother by expecting her to better manage family relationships (Humphreys & Absler, 2011), and/or in more recent times, services advocate for victimised mothers to separate and isolate themselves from the relationship with her partner in order to prevent ongoing violence. The justice system in turn was utilised as a means to hold these men accountable for their behaviour. The bid to hold men accountable often translates to tougher laws, more frequent law enforcement responses, and court-mandated intervention programs (Featherstone & Peckover, 2007). There is growing evidence that punitive

measures delivered on their own are ineffective and that interventions which target behaviour change are likely a significant factor in improving outcomes for families (Meyer, 2018). However, the experiences and perspectives of violent men are largely absent from the evidence that guided social policy and, as described in the previous section, the current intervention landscape.

## **2.2 Response to Family Violence (NZ and Internationally) and Approach to Intervention**

### **2.2.1 *The need for interventions***

Fraser et al (2009) define interventions as “change strategies” and that these change strategies differ significantly in content (p. 18). In the context of family violence the aim of perpetrator responses are diverse whereby a number of programmes work to directly address men’s attitudes to women and children, whereas other treatments target perpetrator or parenting behaviours (Eckhardt, 2013; McConnell & Taylor, 2016). Although the literature in this domain has highlighted the need for social services to work more closely and effectively with fathers, there is certainly a long way to go before this can be considered a consistent, standard practice (Brown, et al., 2009). Simply removing an abusive father from the family does not protect future victims and children from scheduled contact, although it is an effective measure in the short term. McConnell et al. (2016) shared several fundamental reasons why interventions with fathers who bully, abuse, and misunderstand the needs of children are critical; (a) interventions with a father-focus recognise that children are victims of IPV and family violence and can give them a voice; (b) they can emphasise that men are accountable for their children’s wellbeing with a healthy father-child relationship is one aspect of that (Allen & Dally, 2007); (c) it can spread the load of childrearing responsibilities, which in turn supports mothers and mitigates risks relating to

poor maternal mental and physical health; and (d) such interventions enable violent fathers to be monitored, which can reduce the risks for children and partners. Moreover, Adhia and Jeong (2019) also emphasise that explicitly recognising phenomena such as the spillover hypothesis is important. The spillover hypothesis suggests that “emotions, behaviours, or affect transfer directly from the intimate relationship to the parent-child relationship” (p. 1). There exists sound empirical research in support of this notion (Krishnakumar & Buehler, 2000; Levendosky et al, 2003) which further highlights the importance of intervening with perpetrators of IPV when children cohabit. In light of these important justifications for intervention, Adhia and Jeong (2019) describe an increase in parenting-centred programmes which have been found to effectively intervene with fathers’ who perpetrate IPV.

### **2.2.2 *The International Context***

The social and historical examination of IPV has been influential in creating the philosophy, configuration, and ambitions of perpetrator intervention (Eckhardt, 2013). Slabber (2012) reports community Non-Violence Programmes (NVP) and Family Violence Programmes (FVP), are the most prevalent interventions. The Duluth Model is the most common of NVP programmes and dominates the literature and intervention field (Slabber, 2012; Eckhardt et al., 2013). This intervention is a feminist, psychoeducational programme which posits that violence is a product of a patriarchal societal system that reinforces the domination of men over women and children. This philosophy, that violence is a by-product of ‘normal’ male behaviour and socialisation, underpins the rationale for the programme content aims. Traditional IPV interventions such as this, consider the main mechanism of behaviour change is through challenging and re-education regarding the patriarchal beliefs about gender roles. This includes challenging the belief that men should exert control over their partners and children and that using violence to assert power, control and privilege is

acceptable (Gondolf, 2007; Eckhardt, 2013). Moreover, this approach encourages notions of egalitarian attitudes and vehemently opposes misogynistic attitudes (Eckhardt et al., 2013). In recent years, the Duluth Model has come under scrutiny regarding its efficacy and effectiveness in decreasing family violence recidivism (Eckhardt et al., 2013; Dixon et al., 2012). Despite this, the core feminist tenets are included in the majority of existing interventions.

Dissatisfaction with the feminist approach led to the adoption of the second treatment type based on a psychological framework of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). This framework is generally more therapeutic in nature and conceptualises IPV as a psychological issue, whereby maladaptive or harmful beliefs and attitudes are the driver of violent behaviour, as well as factors such as emotion dysregulation, cognitive distortions and skills deficits (Polaschek, 2016; Eckhardt et al., 2013). Importantly, this approach still includes many of the feminist viewpoints, however, it extends the range of treatment targets which are more closely related to cognitive therapies utilised to treat individuals experiencing a range of psychological issues. Behaviour change is achieved through the therapeutic (and group) relationship and empirical treatment activities relating to skills around reducing anger (e.g., utilising timeout or changing negative attributions), identifying and changing faulty cognitions around women and relationships, and how best to manage conflict (Polaschek, 2016).

The distinction between the Duluth Model intervention and a CBT format is often muddled and/or blended. The blending of the models is informed by the notion that there are multiple causes of family violence as described above. Unfortunately, the evidence is consistently unclear as to whether these interventions, muddled or not, actually reduce recidivism to a significant degree (Slabber, 2012; McConnell & Taylor, 2016; Labarre et al.,

2016; Eckhardt et al., 2013). Additionally, the evaluation of family violence interventions is plagued by methodological challenges and inconsistencies, issues with programme attrition and fidelity both internationally and here in Aotearoa (Slabber, 2012; Polaschek, 2016; McConnell & Taylor, 2016; Labarre, 2016). Gondolf (2003) reported that at the time of publication 40 evaluations had attempted to address the effectiveness of interventions for people who use violence with many suggesting little or no programme effect. More recently, Eckhardt et al. (2013) states in their effectiveness research that “interventions for perpetrators showed equivocal results regarding their ability to lower the risk of IPV, and available studies had many methodological flaws” (p. 197). Of the 20 studies the authors reviewed, 9 reported statistically significant results, however, 3 were plagued by methodological issues which limited the validity of the results and only one study utilised a randomised design. This reveals that in 2013 there were only 6 studies, internationally, that produced results which could be validated by evidence. Considering the size and seriousness of this issues, this is call for great concern.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) in the United Kingdom stated that there is a “...lack of large, robust studies of interventions for people who perpetrate abuse. The majority were non-experimental (primarily before-and-after studies). Often they did not include a comparison group, had relatively small sample sizes, reported high rates of attrition, and lack follow-up beyond programme completion.” (NICE, 2014, p. 62). Mackay et al. (2016), as part of their work on behalf of Australia’s National Research Organisation for Women’s Safety, concur with this statement, making it clear there are continuing issues in the field and that the “evaluation evidence is sparse”, limiting our understanding of what factors work and why (p.4).

### **2.2.3 Interventions in Aotearoa**

As described above, the prevalence of family violence in Aotearoa is one of the highest in the OECD according to international statistics (UN Women, 2015). Aotearoa has a unique historical narrative and political backdrop of which is particularly important for the current study. The New Zealand Government has targeted a reduction in family violence across multiple policy developments involving the Ministry of Social Development, Police, and the Ministry of Justice. Examples of these responses include Police having the ability to intervene directly by means of issuing Police Safety Orders when responding to family violence incidents, new laws allowing those experiencing violence to take 10 days paid leave in order to manage separation and increase safety, and the piloting of the Integrated Safety Response Programme across several New Zealand cities. The Integrated Safety Response allows NGOs, Schools, Police, Plunket and Oranga Tamariki to respond to family violence with a more integrated and collaborative approach. Finally, on May of 2019, the Prime Minister of New Zealand presented the Wellbeing Budget which pledged to “tackle New Zealand’s long-term challenges” (The Wellbeing Budget, 2019, p. 3) in the area of family/whānau wellbeing, including considerable efforts to address the problem of family/whānau violence.

In 1995 the New Zealand Government passed the Domestic Violence Act (1995) and in doing so has paved the way for the current family violence intervention landscape. The Act’s primary intent is to provide mandatory programmes for individuals involved in family/whānau violence as a means to provide greater protection and to reduce or prevent family/whānau violence (Slabber, 2012). Chalk (2000) described how many prevention and treatment programmes have been funded by major governmental economic investment, and stated that “tremendous diversity and array of interventions have emerged over the past few decades [which] remain largely undocumented in the literature” (p.33). Chalk also

described how, as we have covered in previous sections of this chapter, the group of people using family violence is heterogeneous in nature, a characteristic which is mirrored in the interventions landscape. For example, these interventions, programmes or support groups are commonly formulated around individual need (those of victims), rather than a research driven empirical theory of change. What this results in is a sector that includes many programmes, created in “individualised and context-dependent ways” (p. 34), which shifts depending on the organisation’s underlying theoretical perspective of family violence. For example, women’s refuges, shelters, and centres are likely to create or advocate for a programme which is grounded in the feminist or sociological theories, whereas the justice sector, including programmes delivered in correctional settings, may formulate or utilise personality or typology perspectives in addressing behaviour change.

Polaschek (2016) reviewed the current aims of family violence responses in Aotearoa and determined that these can be grouped into three subtypes: punitive, containing, and rehabilitative. Punitive responses, as described earlier, are the means utilised by justice systems such as arrest, conviction and imprisonment. Containment strategies are the use of measures to mitigate the likelihood of further acts of violence such as police safety orders and GPS monitoring. Finally, rehabilitative measures encompass NVPs. Polaschek proposes that these elements do not function effectively in isolation and that an integrated response is necessary to ensure victim safety and perpetrator accountability and change.

For the purposes of this research the focus remains on what Polaschek (2016) titled “perpetrator programmes” (p. 14). The author established three broad subtypes of programmes that operate in Aotearoa; NVPs, Department of Corrections, and Kaupapa Māori programmes. Polaschek (2016) describes NVPs as being delivered by a range of non-

governmental organisations in both individual and group formats. These have evolved over a number of years and are described by the agencies that deliver them as ‘psychoeducational’. These are also described as often being co-created by various agencies, therefore are often similar in their content, style and length. In 2016/2017 the Ministry of Justice was funding 90 family violence programmes, of which, three-quarters were NVPs (Paulin et al, 2018). Paulin (2018) noted that three-quarters of the participants who started the NVP completed it. NVPs are generally delivered in a weekly group format for a minimum of eight weeks but organisations make allowances for individuals who may not fit within the group environment. Upon surveying the mainstream providers Paulin et al (2018) reported that 46% utilised either one or a fusion of the following approaches; CBT approach, 40% an ‘other counselling approach’, 33% the Duluth model and 21% Motivational Interviewing. Of the providers 18% described themselves as a Kaupapa Māori organisation, of which 30% were described using the CBT framework, 10% the Duluth model, 30% Te Whare Tapa Whā, 10% Motivational Interviewing and 50% a Kaupapa Māori approach.

The second subtype described by Polaschek, Family Violence Programmes (FVPs), are delivered by the Department of Corrections for offenders on community sentences who are considered at low or medium risk of reoffending. According to Ryan and Jones (2016) FVPs focus on “treating the needs of offenders, and helping them understand motivations for their abusive behaviour. It includes modules on managing emotions, beliefs and attitudes, substance use, relationship skills, and the effects of family violence” (p.6) The third broad category of programme types is family/whānau violence interventions – Kaupapa Māori programmes, which all draw from te aō Māori (a Māori worldview). Generally Kaupapa Māori programmes consist of a process of restoring and reconnecting the individual with their culture via mātauranga Māori, including whakapapa, tikanga,



wairua, tapu, mauri, and mana. This process of restoration and reconnection is thought to decrease offending behaviour, increase value in whānau, and to decrease family harm (Polaschek, 2016). Further discussion of Kaupapa Māori programmes is presented in the following chapter.

Whilst the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Social Development have pledged to allocate resources based on evidence-based practice it has been consistently thwarted by results indicating no conclusive evidence that the programmes are successful (Radatz & Wright, 2015; Slabber, 2012; Antonowicz & Ross, 1994). What is known about the current landscape is that when there is a comparison between family violence interventions to other areas such as substance misuse, child health, and community violence programmes, family violence is relatively immature in both the age of creation and the quality and quantity of evaluative literature. Moreover, when the effectiveness (however challenged by methodological limitations) is known and compared to treatments with people with substance use issues, or violent offenders, these interventions report significant reductions in relapse and recidivism respectively. In contrast, the findings for family violence interventions are mixed and are hindered by difficulty faced in attributing any change to the programme itself (Radatz & Wright, 2015).

#### ***2.2.4 Parenting Programmes for Violent Fathers***

The sections above provided a synthesis of interventions pertaining to the use of violence against an intimate partner, which is important to consider in the context of the topic areas. However, the current study is now moving in to focus on the interventions which pertain most directly to the current research, specifically, interventions which endeavour to minimise family violence in the context of parenting. Most of the current

literature relating to interventions for fathers who are violent is focussed on the description of the programme's curriculum and implementation rather than a programme's effectiveness (Labarre et al., 2016). This is likely due to both the novelty of these programmes and methodological challenges which also beset effective research in this area. Labarre et al. (2016) conducted an analysis which reviewed and examined what parenting-centred programmes were available for violent fathers internationally. Utilising a relatively broad inclusion criteria the review unearthed ten programmes. Of the ten programmes, six had accompanying evaluative data.

Scott and Moderos (2012) synthesised the characteristics of such programmes and reported that there are four common features; "(1) motivational approaches to engage and retain fathers in intervention; (2) an emphasis on the need to end the violence against the children's mother; (3) program content addressing accountability for past abuse; and (4) interventions to reduce fathers' use of harsh discipline" (p.11). Labarre et al (2016) highlight that these interventions are more similar than they are different, containing similar methods of delivering the programme and with similar objectives and underlying theory. The theoretical framework that underpinned these interventions were psycho-educational, feminist, CBT and/or Duluth model inspired. For nine of the ten programmes in the Labarre et al. (2016) study the primary objective was for the fathers to desist their violence towards their partner and their children. The basic tenet of these nine programmes was that by "encouraging fathers' acceptance, responsibility, and accountability for both their violence and its effects, and developing empathy toward their children's lived experience" this would promote less violent behaviour. Other objectives included the education and promotion of adaptive and supportive parenting practices whereby men are encouraged to be a positive role model and family member. The content which was included to motivate fathers to

engage and make positive changes included self-reflective exercises such as reflecting on their own upbringing and how that impacts how they parent.

Although the overall literature regarding the effectiveness of family violence interventions points to a lack of valid and reliable programmes, there are individual programmes that show promise for their growing evidence base. Caring Dads Safer Children (Caring Dads) is a programme which aims to increase the safety and well-being of children whose fathers have been neglectful, violent or abusive, through working with fathers who have used or are at high risk of using harmful behaviours (McConnell et al., 2017). The principles that underpin Caring Dads include: (a) the notion that if men's over-controlling behaviour, self-centred attitudes, and sense of entitlement are not addressed, then change will be much less likely to occur; (b) a focus on the development of child-centred parenting; (c) a focus on the overlap between child abuse and intimate partner violence. For example the manual states "You can't be a good father and a disrespectful abusive partner" (Scott et al., 2018, p. 9); (d) men's accountability is paramount to learning, however, participants often portray low motivation to engage, therefore the programme initially focuses on engagement. There are three components to a Caring Dads program, including (a) a seventeen-week manualised group intervention program for men; (b) systematic outreach to children's mothers; and (c) coordinated case management to ensure that child safety and well-being is enhanced as a result of fathers' involvement in intervention (McConnel et al, 2017). The Caring Dads authors (Scott et al., 2018) describe that the treatment targets include a decrease in behaviours such as anger and hostility, misuse of substances, and the use of corporal punishment. It also aims to shift perceptions such as the child as the problem and increase positive involvement, child-centredness and family cohesion.

Several evaluations have been conducted to investigate the efficacy of the Caring Dads programme. Scott and Lishak (2012) examined participant self-reported changes in generalised anger, parenting practices, and co-parenting behaviour utilising pre- and post-programme measures. In relation to generalised anger the results indicated small but statistically significant change over time for two of the subscales (hostility and verbal anger). The remaining two scales (physical and general anger) indicated no significant change pre- and post-evaluation. In regard to the parenting measure, participants showed significant reductions in overactivity, laxness, and hostility (medium, small, and small effect sizes respectively). Finally, the most successful change was established relating to co-parenting, with significant change measured in both communication and respect with medium effect sizes.

A more recent evaluation (McConnell et al; 2016) utilised a mixed-methods pre and post design with a 6-month follow up (n= 334 pre-, 185 post-programme respectively) and compared the intervention group to a waitlist control group. The researchers also wanted to include the voices of the children and partners; therefore, questionnaires, face-to-face surveys, and qualitative interviews were completed by these family members to capture their perspectives. Participants' overall stress scores indicated statistically significant reductions (parental distress, parent-child dysfunctional interaction, and difficult child scales) indicating that programme participants were less stressed and had more positive interactions with their children. Moreover, this result was maintained at the 6-month follow up (n=52). While parenting stress reduced for both groups of fathers (waitlist and experimental group), there was significantly more reduction for fathers who completed the programme. Fathers parenting behaviour was assessed utilising the Parental Acceptance and Rejection Questionnaire, a self-report measure that assumes fathers have a somewhat

realistic view of their behaviour with their children. However, according to both the pre- and post-measures, fathers' average scores indicated that they had more accepting behaviour than would be found in typically warm and loving families, a strong indicator of a social-desirability response bias. Children reported their fathers' score to be in the normal range and this did not significantly differ pre- and post-intervention. Despite this, qualitative measures indicated that the majority of children had seen an improvement in their father's behaviour post intervention. Children reported that the communication from their father had improved, including listening skills, and their father trying to understand them more. Children also reported that the atmosphere in the home had shifted to a less hostile one, with less arguing. Children also reported that their fathers parented in a more child-centred way by paying an interest in their school work and playing with them more (McConnell et al, 2016).

McConnell et al. (2016), also reported that partners experienced statistically significant improvement in areas such as wellbeing, irritability, depression, and anxiety. Partners also reported that incidents of controlling behaviour were reduced. Four of the Controlling Behaviour Inventory subscales (violence, injury, denial/minimisation, and emotional abuse) reported by partners had statistically significant reductions in the average score over the three time points. However, these results were not universal across participants and in some cases the behaviour of fathers had not changed. In other cases, the changes that had been made (post-programme evaluation) were not sustained at follow-up. The authors reported that in some cases some fathers were reported to actually use the content of the programme as a means of undermining their current partner.

In light of the growing evidence regarding the Caring Dads effectiveness, its focus on fathers, and the authors willingness to share programme and facilitation material with the

programme development team from Parenting Place and Salvation Army, it was selected to inform elements of Building Awesome Matua.

### **2.2.5 *Culturally Responsive Interventions in the Context of Colonisation***

In conjunction with the call for interventions that can prove their effectiveness, is an equally important need for culturally responsive interventions. In Aotearoa, the Department of Corrections, organisations that deliver interventions, and the bodies that govern them hold the obligation of prioritising the principles of te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi) and working toward the “restoration of equity between Māori and non-Māori offending” (Waitangi Tribunal, 2017, p. 42). There is acknowledgement that Māori face and need to traverse a number of unique disadvantages, inequities, and challenges that their European counterparts do not encounter (Chalmers, 2014). These factors are a result of colonisation and reflect both the historical and current societal influences on Māori as the indigenous people of Aotearoa. The Meihana Model, a model created for professionals in psychology and health services, captures these challenges in what the authors title “Ngā Hau E Whā” (the four winds), which includes colonisation, migration, marginalisation, and racism (Pitama et al., 2017). Te Puni Kōkiri (2014) argues that understanding the process of colonisation is fundamental to understanding why Māori are now overrepresented in many if not all negative health outcomes (Ministry of Health, 2014) and equate to half of the prison population (Department of Corrections, 2017). Colonisation involved the systematic suppression of te reo and tikanga Māori (traditional practices and protocol), redistribution and dispossession of land and wealth to the benefit of Pākehā and the detriment of Māori; political re-organisation and attempted assimilation of Māori into Pākehā culture, where Māori children were forced into the Pākehā school systems (Manning, 2018; Hughes, 2018; Te Rito, 2017; S. Macfarlane, 2009; Pihama et al, 2017).

As the result of subjugation and colonisation of Māori, whānau, iwi and hapu dynamics were also disrupted, which many sources cite as having led to the proliferation of whānau violence within these communities (Te Rito, 2018; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010; Ruwhiu, 2009). Many writers document the stark differences in pre- and post- colonisation Māori society (FVDRC-6, 2020), and indigenous researchers propose that these changes continue to have an impact across a wide scope of Māori outcomes, including family/whānau violence. Pre-colonisation, the societal structure was not hierarchical or dominated by patriarchal structures. The roles of men and women were distinct but provided a balance and formed an integral part of a greater whole, highlighting the “interrelationship or whakawhanaungatanga of all living things” (Mikaere, 1994, p.7). Pākehā were observed to be tolerant of physical punishment of women and children, whereas, in Māoridom children were considered taonga and relationships vital. Violence within whānau was not commonplace, and when there were issues of safety, whānau and hapu took action in order to support and keep women safe (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2008). Durie (2001, p. 208) states

“there is no historical support for claims that traditional Māori society tolerated violence and abuse towards children and women, or that some members of the group were of lesser value than others. An unsafe household demands a whānau response and, as an immediate priority, an assurance that safety can be provided – elsewhere if not at home. Then, safety guaranteed, the way is clear to embark on a journey which will relieve hurt, restore healthy relationships, and, in the process, strengthen personal and group identities.”

Pākehā also brought with them and subsequently indoctrinated a codified system of law which placed emphasis on punishment and discounted indigenous systems. Modern implications of this are systems which are inherently and structurally racist and continue to sustain punitive practices, despite the acknowledgement that recidivism is high, at the expense of rehabilitation, reconciliation and restoration (FVDRC-6, 2020). As Durie (2001) highlighted above, Māori were governed by tikanga which included their own way of

managing breaches within their communities (iwi, hapu, and whānau). This too included restorative practices and involved collective support to restore relationships (Cram et al, 2018).

In light of this, there has been a call for programmes to be much more culturally relevant and responsive, which is clearly a reaction to the “one size fits all” models of rehabilitation (Heffernan et al, 2017). Bent-Goodley (2005) explains, people of colour continue to be poorly represented in research and intervention, are more likely to experience barriers in accessing health and mental health resources, and have a higher likelihood of being discriminated against both systemically and personally. Kaupapa Māori strategies for addressing family violence attempt to help Māori participants discover and appropriate the rich heritage of whānau values, tikanga, and mātauranga that was lost to colonisation. It is hypothesised that when evidence-informed intervention practices are situated within such a culturally rich framework, there is a much greater opportunity for participant uptake, retention, and ultimately transformation. Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to examine a very recent support programme for men desisting from family violence, Building Awesome Matua, that has attempted to apply a culturally-centred, kaupapa Māori framework and practice principles.



### **3 Chapter Three: Present Study**

#### **3.1 Summary of Introduction**

The previous chapter is a depiction of the historical and current social, political and judicial context of family/whānau violence. The introduction emphasised the current understanding, prevalence and impact of family/whānau violence on children. It also summarised key theories of family violence, which attempt to provide explanatory frameworks regarding the etiology of the problem. As described the etiological theories provide insight into the theory underlying the varied family/whānau interventions that exist. In summarising the key factors that motivate and underpin the current research, the focus remains on several important factors; firstly, it is clear that the current understandings of family/whānau violence have led to a landscape of fractured interventions, of which the efficacy is largely questionable (internationally) and mostly unknown in the Aotearoa landscape. Secondly, there is now an acknowledgement of a need to better understand the men who use violence and their life-course experiences that shape their attitudes toward women, family, and parenting. Third, and for the purposes of this study situated in Aotearoa, there is an emphasis on the unique experiences of Māori, their over-representation in family/whānau violence statistics, and the historical and current sociological processes that have contributed to this quandary. This has led to a call by many for interventions to prioritise Māori kaupapa and mātauranga, and to (re)discover traditional whānau and parenting tikanga. The intersection of these factors offers a foundation for the current chapter, the present study. After a brief review of kaupapa Māori programmes that address whānau violence and research that examines the pathways of Māori men who have relinquished violence, I will introduce Building Awesome Matua and describe the focus of this evaluation.

### **3.2 Kaupapa Programmes for Whānau Violence**

As reviewed above, family/whānau violence disproportionately affects Māori, whereby Māori are twice as likely to experience whānau violence than other New Zealanders (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2019). Currently, social policies, strategies and programmes funded by the government are founded on research that conceptualises family violence through a westernised lens (Dobbs et al., 2014). It has been widely acknowledged that the westernised approaches in indigenous communities produces minimal reduction in whānau violence (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010; Pihama, 2008; Pihama et al, 2003; Cripps, 2007) and is partly a result of these programmes not addressing the specific cultural needs of whānau or the context of colonisation. Over the past 20 years there has been a collective effort to create a well-grounded literature base and response involving “kaupapa Māori, whānau centred and strengths-based approaches to working with the complex issues [of whānau violence] (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2019, p. 5). Dobbs et al (2014) explained that much of the literature was related to Māori, however was not undertaken by Māori. Unfortunately, researchers also used methodologies based on westernised ideologies, therefore were consistent with deficit and/or pathologizing approaches. These approaches to both research and subsequent intervention are consistently ineffective and at times damaging for Māori (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2019). According to Dobbs et al. (2014), the most commonly cited definition of kaupapa Māori is by Smith (1990), which is “related to being Māori, is connected to Māori philosophy and principles, takes for granted the validity and legitimacy of Māori and the importance of Māori language and culture, and is concerned with the struggle for autonomy over our own cultural well-being” (p.1).

The current study relies on the most up-to-date research that is grounded in Māori principles; however, this research base in specific relation to whānau violence is reasonably

small. Aotearoa Māori who are researching in this area focus on strategies that are based on strengthening whānau; however, this distinction between whānau and family violence is relatively new. A literature review conducted by Amokura (2007) identified several key gaps in the research including topics such as “violence and Māori; violence and indigenous peoples; violence and early intervention and prevention; violence and youth; violence and practical activity based models; and violence and traditional healing”. In 2010, Te Puni Kōkiri confirmed that literature in these areas were lacking and that the main area where research was beginning to mount related to “collective responsibility through whakapapa and whanaungatanga” (p.53).

There are many resources regarding general frameworks for understanding and responding to whānau violence, which commonly analyse the sector as a whole and prioritise contextualising the impacts of colonisation (see FVDRC-6, 2020; FVDRC-5, 2017, Te Puni Kōkiri, 2008; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2019). In contrast, there is little or no literature regarding the effectiveness of current whānau violence interventions, specifically programmes for tāne. The most recent review of Kaupapa Māori interventions for women and children impacted by whānau violence and for men that use whānau violence, was conducted in 2008 (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2008). This review is focussed primarily on the description and understanding of the key kaupapa components utilised in the review programmes.

### ***3.2.1 Tāne and Desistance from Violence***

Programmes are often only one factor of many which result in the successful desistance of family violence, and in some cases programmes may not feature in this process at all. Despite not having efficacy data to draw on in the context of whānau violence, investigating the broader context of change can help in understanding to what extent programmes feature in the journey toward desistance. In surveying the literature it is

clear there is a substantial gap of knowledge on the subject (Walker et al, 2015). Two significant models postulate the processes of change and desistance; the first is the Transtheoretical Model of Change, and the second is the Walker Model of Desistance.

### **Transtheoretical Model of Change**

The Transtheoretical Model of Change (TTM; Prochaska & DiClemente, 1982; Prochaska, DiClemente, & Norcross, 1992) is a more generalised model of change, originally interested in individuals attempting to desist from smoking and individuals who engage in other addictive behaviours. TTM fundamentally conceptualises change as a process of cognitive and behavioural stages which build upon one another. The model is presented in a spiral, rather than linear stages, as the authors recognise that many people will relapse and engage in the 'old' behaviours at any time point. There are five stages in the process that include the following: *Precontemplation*, is characterised by an ignorance relating to the need to change. The individual often engages in minimisation, denial and blaming of others. The second stage is *Contemplation* which is the stage where the problem is acknowledged but no action is taken to create change. *Preparation* is the stage where the individual has the intention to change in the near future, and they may have already taken small actions towards engaging in change; *action*, this stage is where individuals actually engage in the modification of behaviour; and finally, *maintenance*, where individuals engage in self-monitoring to avoid or minimise the risk of relapse. The core limitation in relation to the use of the model is the lack of generalisability to indigenous cultures because it is underpinned and dominated the individual's internal psychological processes (intrapsychic factors) (Leary et al., 2015). Instead, a culturally relevant model would explicitly incorporate ecological contexts in order to better represent the important attributes of collectivistic cultures.

### **Walker Model of Desistance**

The second model of interest is the Walker Model of Desistance (K. Walker et al., 2015, 2017a; K. Walker et al., 2017b; see Figure 3.1 below). The creation of this model was motivated by the identification that offending decreases as the offenders age increases, highlighting a potential underlying process of change. The creators utilised semi-structure interviews (n=38) with two groups of men. The first group had been violence-free for at least 12 months, while the second group were still using violence. Figure 3.1 demonstrates that this model also conceptualises change as a non-linear process and is highly specific to the individual and their contextual factors.

The two phases in this model are termed *Lifestyle Behaviours, Old Ways of Being (violent)*, and *Lifestyle Behaviours, New Ways of Being (non-violent)*. The *Catalysts for Change* are not “discrete unique incidents associated with a transition from persistence to desistance from IPV” (K. Walker et al., 2017a, p. 379) but rather are the accumulation of triggers which stimulate or motivate change. The mechanism for change is the continuing accumulation of *negative emotional experiences* in conjunction with the accumulation of *consequences of violence*. The *Old ways of being* phase is characterised by *antecedents* and *triggers* to violence of which the consequence is the *expression of violence*. The violence can take the form of physical and/or psychological violence and the internal or cognitive response to the individual’s use of violence is the rationalisation and minimisation of their behaviour resulting in the *permission to be violent*. Other such permissions to be violent include the cultural/societal normalisation of violence, and identification with violent stereotypes or characteristics (for example, a person who believes themselves short-tempered or a gang-member who condones violence).

The fundamental aspect that bridges the old and new ways of being is the accumulation of the *negative emotional responses* and the *consequences of violence* which leads to the *point of resolve* and the *autonomous decision to change*. The authors' state that the initial psychological comfort in using violence shifts and the individual experiences psychological discomfort in using old behaviours which motivate new adaptive behaviours. The *New ways of being* includes three features; *managing triggers* and *antecedents*, which offers the opportunity to engage in redefining themselves and giving themselves *permission to be non-violent*, and also receiving *external support and input* which helps to maintain and validate change. This phase is also places importance on the shift in how the individual views themselves and their world, including taking responsibility for their actions, and making positive lifestyle and personal choices in order to create an environment which aligns with their new, non-violent identity. Similarly to the TTM, the limitations of this model relate to the sample which included a small, non-diverse sample.

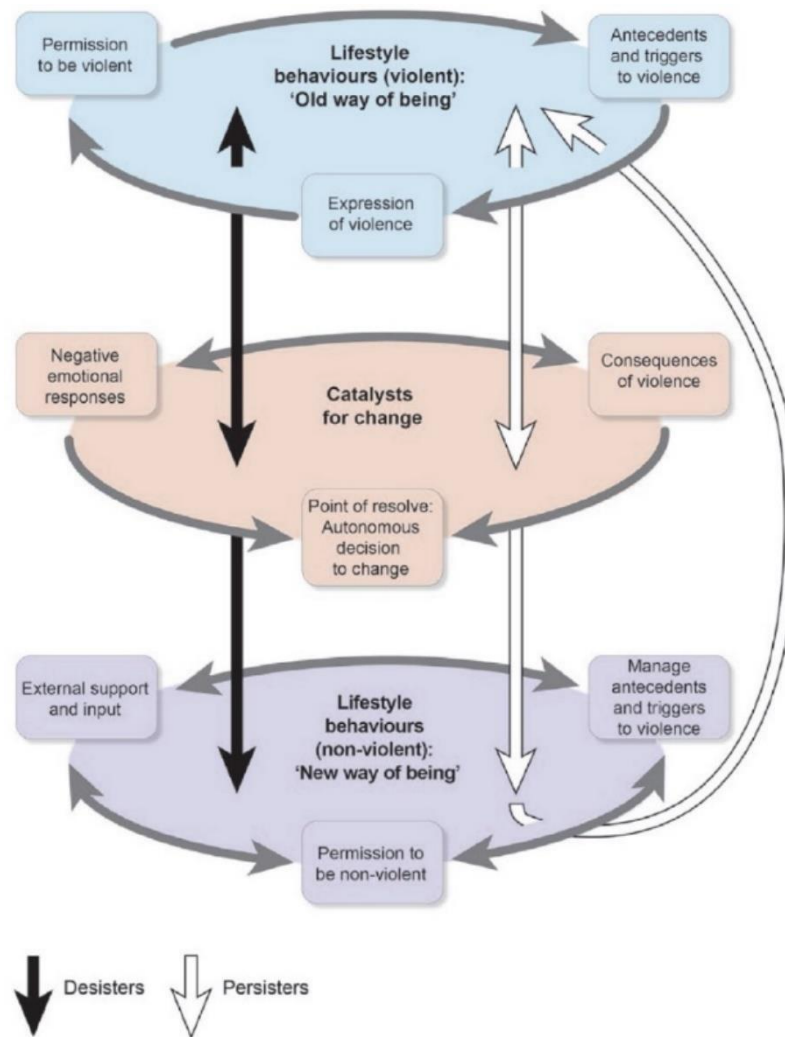


Figure 3.1: Walkers Model of Desistance

Note: Reprinted “Desistance from intimate partner violence: A conceptual model and framework for practitioners for managing the process of change” by K. Walker, E. Bowen, S. Brown, E. Sleath, 2014, *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, (30)15, p. 2735. Copyright 2015 SAGE Publications. Used with permission.

Here in Aotearoa, several qualitative studies have focussed on the experiences and pathways of desistance among violent men and fathers. Roguski and Gregory (2014) surveyed former family violence perpetrators in order to understand their experience and process of change. Of the 26 participants, 70% were Māori and overall 66% of the participants reported using family violence for 11 years or longer. A large majority (85%) reported experiencing childhood physical violence, of these 50% also experienced psychological abuse. Sadly, 20 (76%) of the participants stated that no one intervened to

stop the violence they experienced, and that violence was commonplace within their wider communities. Community violence included, corporal punishment at school and church, indicating that violence on the whole was likely a normalised phenomenon throughout the formative years of these men's lives.

Participants identified several factors that enabled their acknowledgement of a need for change. In line with the inspiration for and phases of the Walker Model of Desistance, the first factor involved maturation and self-reflection, whereby most of the participants reported needing to move from understanding violence as normal, to knowing that violence is wrong. Secondly, the relationship with prosocial, informal, and positive community connections engendered both self-reflection, peer support, and mentoring style relationships and were held in high regard by the participants. These relationships tended to be 'accidental' rather than facilitated. These mentor-style figures facilitated a non-violent frame of reference and modelled positive behaviours and beliefs aligning with both Walker's *new ways of being* and the TTM's maintenance stage of change. Interestingly, 96% of the participants shared they would prefer these non-formal community connections over psychological or counselling style settings.

Finally, Roguski and Gregory (2014) highlight the mixed feelings the participants had regarding non-violence programmes. The participants attributed little of their change to mandated non-violence programmes, whereby most participants believed that, in being forced to attend, they lacked the motivation to seek behaviour change at that time. However, those participants that shared positive experiences, attributed change to the group environment itself, such as sharing their experience and hearing about others' experiences. Sustaining change was another key factor explored by Rosguski and Gregory, whereby participants believed there were several key factors that helped them to maintain



a violence free home. These included support from others, such as prosocial peers, support workers and family/whānau, the use and practice of acquired skills and a supportive environment. Finally, In Roguski and Gregory's (2014) research, the most salient barrier towards sustaining change was the perceived lack of post-programme support. The men highlighted that they felt as though they had learnt many new skills and information but felt they lacked the support to do it alone.

Finally, Frost (2019) investigated the factors contributing to the success of Māori men desisting from whānau violence in a small qualitative study. This study emphasises several factors that contradict Walker's model and several important elements specific to the author's Māori participants. For example, contrary to the Walker Model of Desistance (Walker et al., 2015), Frost found that triggers for change were, in the most part, a result of positive life-course events. These events included relationships with people who "held mana and gave hope" (p. 108). Participants from Frost's (2019) research highlight that change did not happen in isolation and was a result of accessing people and services which were "positive, respectful, and non-judgemental" (p.109). In agreement with the above models, change for these men was not characterised by only internal or solely external processes but was a combination of complex interactions between the two.

As this small group of Aotearoa studies suggest, and in line with recent shifts in social and justice policy, there is a need for violence intervention initiatives for tāne Māori to be mana enhancing (strengths-based), and firmly rooted in Māori tikanga and kaupapa Māori principles. Furthermore, and as reviewed in the first chapter, given the heterogeneity of men who use violence in their family and the need to seriously consider the ongoing effects of colonisation for Māori men, it seems imperative that researchers and practitioners gain a better understanding of the developmental and whānau life experiences

of men desisting from violence. A better understanding of the context of their lives should in theory inform more targeted interventions with increased opportunity for success. A new initiative that is attempting to incorporate these recommendations is Building Awesome Matua. The programme which is the central focus of this thesis.

### **3.3 Building Awesome Matua**

Building Awesome Matua is a family violence programme specifically for fathers who have used violence or who are considered a risk to their children. The programme was created through a collaboration between The Salvation Army and Parenting Place, with support from a parenting researcher at the University of Canterbury. This programme has a specific focus on parenting and participants are referred to the programme from a variety of sources. The participants may be in a correctional setting, have been identified from community organisations as being a “good fit” for the programme, there may also be some participants who are mandated through the Family Court to attend the programme, as well as self-referrals.

Building Awesome Matua can be considered a novel programme that draws from mātauranga and te ao Māori, and is still in the early stages of testing and delivery. Building Awesome Matua prioritises te aō Māori (the Māori worldview) and believes that the restoration of participants’ connections to their culture and community, in conjunction with increasing and improving parenting skills, is a more effective pathway to safer families in Aotearoa. Due to the community-based nature of the programme in both its development and delivery, Building Awesome Matua is best considered a facilitated support group, rather than a clinical intervention and would cross over between the categories of non-violence programmes and kaupapa Māori programmes identified by Polachek (2016) and reviewed above. Practically, Building Awesome Matua is an 8 week manualised parenting course

based on kaupapa Māori principles, that incorporates several intervention elements from the Caring Dads Safer Children programme developed by Scott and Crooks (2004) .

Building Awesome Matua's content and delivery is based on six key values (1) Manaakitanga – to enhance the mana of other, (2) Aroha – to protect and promote another's life essence, (3) Whanaungatanga – interconnected reciprocal relationships that contribute to the whole (4) Mana Motuhake - self-determination and agency within one's destiny, (5) Ako – Reciprocal learning, and (6) Wairuatanga – to acknowledge the spiritual existence through and all around us (Building Awesome Matua facilitator training manual, p. 4). These values are woven into group discussion, video resources, and reflection exercises that attempt to educate men about traditional Māori values, tikanga, the impact of colonisation, and to inspire a new understanding of the role of fatherhood, positive parenting strategies, and self-regulation.

### **3.3.1 *Building Awesome Matua: Theory of Change.***

A Theory of Change (ToC) model was developed for Building Awesome Matua led by the University of Canterbury and involving stakeholders from both Parenting Place and Salvation Army. Reinholz and Andrews (2020, p.3) define a theory of change as “a particular approach for making underlying assumptions in a change project explicit and using the desired outcomes of the project as a mechanism to guide project planning, implementation, and evaluation”. The collaborative approach in ToC development, particularly when working with community-led programmes, prioritizes the inclusion of both research-informed evidence and local practitioner expertise. There are many different types of ToC models and different authors emphasise different components. The Building Awesome Matua ToC (2018) explicitly identifies underlying assumptions and details an evidence-informed rationale for how key programme strategies and processes should facilitate short-term

targets and longer-term outcomes. Reinholz and Andrews (2020, p.3) state that the process of ToC development is not simply to ask “does it work”, but rather to consider more critically under what conditions does Building Awesome Matua work, and for whom?

The Building Awesome Matua ToC (2018) is summarised here for two reasons; first, it will provide the reader with important insight into the rationale and the assumptions of the programme. Secondly, the research questions for this study were developed to explicitly test some of the underlying assumptions of the programme or the rationale for how Building Awesome Matua is related to targeted outcomes. The Building Awesome Matua ToC is centred around several assumptions regarding the possible mechanisms of change for participants and is linked directly to the primary and long-term objectives of the programme. The programme assumptions are threefold. First, participants “don’t know what they don’t know”: Once the participants engage in education and learn new skills their parenting proficiency should increase and there should be a shift in thinking which prioritises their child’s needs. The assumption is that the participants have not been raised in a culture where whanaungatanga is well practiced, there is no or little knowledge or reflection of their role and value as a parent, how positive parenting is practiced and why it is important. There is also the notion that participants may have a patriarchal view of gender and family-based hierarchy, so addressing and re-framing respect for women and children is paramount.

The second assumption in the Building Awesome Matua ToC is that healing is possible and relationships and connectedness are fundamental for human flourishing. Participants can heal both relationships with themselves and with their whānau. Participants have engaged in violence which has affected the fabric of their whānau. Motivation and engagement in the programme, as well as positively modelled examples

from facilitators and resources, helps to facilitate learning in several key areas related to healing whānau relationships and changing interaction patterns. Behaviour change is facilitated through teaching self-reflection, self-regulation, positive modelling, communication, and non-punitive behaviour management strategies.

The third assumption of the Building Awesome Matua ToC is that participants are motivated and capable of change and positive contribution through their participation, and this can be achieved in the right environment. Learning and positive change is possible in a safe and supportive environment. This desire to change relates to people wanting to make positive contributions to their whānau and/or wider community. The connection with facilitators, their culture, and other participants who have shared experiences creates a safe environment to learn and creates and supports a sense of connection and belonging. As the programme privileges te ao Māori and the values described above, this is thought to drive personal and whānau connectedness, and engenders whanaungatanga. Providing education and support will encourage participants towards internal (self), external (family and community), and spiritual growth (Building Awesome Matua ToC, 2018).

The ToC rationale relating to the reduction in anger and violence related risk factors is fundamentally associated with the research and clinical experience of several key authors on the subject (Scott & Crooks, 2004; Scott, 2010; Stewart & Scott, 2014). The authors highlight that abusive fathers' lack of recognition and prioritization of their children's needs for love, respect, and autonomy is the most important issue that needs to be addressed in an intervention. Building Awesome Matua addresses this issue by prioritising children as taonga (treasure), endowed with mana. Building Awesome Matua provides fathers with a new vision for their role as rangatira (leaders). Through their unconditional love for their children, fathers act as a guardian and facilitator of their children's development, supporting

the collective whānau. Moreover, the ToC posits that men with a history of family violence often have a strong need to control their partner or children, yet struggle with controlling their own emotions and impulsive behaviour (Scott & Crooks, 2004; Scott, 2010; Stewart & Scott, 2014). Breakthrough's Building Awesome Matua attempts to address this issue by helping father's see the behaviours and attitudes that they are modelling for their children, their communication patterns, emotion regulation, and behaviour management strategies. As men become less controlling, more responsive and engaged, it is hypothesised to create the conditions which will facilitate the opportunity for relationships to be strengthened. Preventing violence includes re-framing respect for women/children. Building Awesome Matua emphasizes the mana each human inherently has and the role of fathers to facilitate their children's mana and honour them as taunga.

The ToC rationale for improving parenting skills and parenting efficacy, is based on research on the authoritative parenting style (Stewart & Scott, 2014) and parental mentalising (Olgilvie et al., 2014; Camoirano, 2017). Participants learn about the four parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, neglectful) and see the advantages of adopting an authoritative (parent coach), parenting style with their children. Information and exercises on communication, listening, and home atmosphere are hypothesised to help men see their parenting from their children's perspectives. This perspective taking will motivate a shift in improving parenting strategies to better meet children's needs.

Finally, the rationale for improved whānau relationship quality and strengthened cultural identity is based on the explicit teaching and practice of te reo me ona tikanga Māori; which requires facilitators/organisations to demonstrate their capacity to cater to Māori worldview and values. The assumption is that through restorative practice and

education, whānau relationships can be healed and this in turn will also influence the factors listed above from Scott and Crooks' (2004) research (the need to control, harsh parenting, and the sense of entitlement). Additionally, cultural understanding and connection for participants may be distorted or absent thus, participants are exposed to a Māori worldview and vision for their family that is culturally empowering, and engenders whanaungatanga (Building Awesome Matua ToC, 2018).

In essence the Building Awesome Matua ToC is underpinned with an assumption that providing a safe space for participants to be honest about their past and present circumstances, (re)connecting participants with traditional kaupapa and tikanga Māori, and providing evidence-informed psycho-education and broad social support will encourage participants to make changes that are transformative personally, relationally, culturally, and spiritually. The full ToC document can be found in Appendix A.

### **3.4 Formative Programme Evaluation: Rationale**

The Building Awesome Matua ToC provides excellent context for the discussion regarding the current study's evaluation and its rationale. As mentioned Building Awesome Matua is in its infancy, having been in circulation in Aotearoa for just under three years. The current research is one part of an early evaluation strategy that was first designed when the ToC was first developed. This first study was an outcome evaluation conducted by Friesen (2020), which utilised a pre- and post-programme, mixed-methods questionnaire. The endeavour was to estimate the level of change pre- and post- programme in order to understand the programme's effectiveness in behaviour change. This study assessed change across six outcomes identified in the ToC: Māori cultural identification, whānau relationships, parenting confidence, anger reactivity, need for control, and mentalising/reflective functioning. The overall results of this study indicated that the change

in participants scores across all the outcomes were in the anticipated direction, whereby participants showed significant levels of change across each outcome measure (expect need for control which was borderline). Finally, the effect sizes ranged from small (need for control, anger reactivity, whānau relationships) to medium (parenting confidence) to large (Māori cultural identification) indicating positive change across the six outcomes.

The present formative evaluation attempts to compliment the outcome evaluation by gathering information from Building Awesome Matua facilitators and their experiences and observations of participant outcomes, reflections on programme content, facilitation challenges, and general strengths, limitations, and opportunities for improvement. It is hoped that the insights from both evaluation studies will inform further refinement and development of Building Awesome Matua. Research indicates that responsivity to treatment interventions is affected by several core characteristics: the programme theory, the implementation and integrity of the programme, and the characteristics of the sample (Bowen & Gilchrist, 2004). The area of focus in the current research is the implementation and integrity of the programme. Rossi et al (1999) provide a framework for comprehensive evaluation specifically created in the context of family violence interventions. *Programme process* is addressed in this formative evaluation, via the qualitative, semi-structured interviews. The aims of the interview were established from the outset and were based on determining the performance of the programme in regard to whether the processes, content, and resources included in the Building Awesome Matua programme are functioning as intended and are able to be successfully and practically delivered by the facilitators.

### **3.5 Effective Group Processes**



Bieling et al (2016) define group processes as “those factors unique to the group setting that influence group function and treatment outcome” (p.24). Yalom and Leszcz (2005, p.30) succinctly defines group process as the “here-and-now interactions between group members, the therapist and the group itself”. Therefore, when a programme is foundationally process oriented, they tend to consist of a less prescribed agenda and focus on interaction, social exchange, and emphasise dialogical features (Fraser et al., 2009). These groups are much more likely to be support-style groups rather than groups centred on a particular psychotherapeutic modality such as CBT, which tend to be highly prescribed. Research tends to focus on the intra-personal and individual-levels relating to change, however, evidence is mounting regarding the impact of specific processes involved in psychotherapeutic, behaviour-change, and support-style groups (Borek et al., 2019). This section aims to orientate the reader to several important factors related to effective group processes including facilitating groups, group atmosphere, social support and fidelity.

### **3.5.1 Facilitating group processes**

The purpose of many programmes is to help develop particular skills and provide education regarding specific topics. Kurz et al. (2020) explain that this education and content is delivered via the facilitator, whose job is to primarily be the “discussion leader, mediator, and enabler” (p.319). Peled and Perel (2012) explain that all groups will include integration of both content and process, and often facilitators will vary in the way in which they engage and attend to both elements. Moreover, Kurz et al (2020) describe that many facilitators tend to be trained in the topic area, however, are often significantly less familiar with the principles of group work and the explicit skills that promote group cohesion. Peled and Perel (2012) detail three important factors relating to facilitators and the interventions they are delivering; (a) *facilitators reactions/perspectives* relating to the manual are an

important element of programme delivery because this influences the facilitators adherence to the manual. In their research, facilitator perspectives varied from resistance to the manual (sometimes refusal) and complete compliance to the content. Whilst these responses are polarising, what is considered the most efficacious approach for facilitators is to learn “to dance with the model [manual] and to view it as an anchor that gives one confidence to occasionally venture” (Peled & Perel, p.397); (b) *dual attentiveness*, is another key facilitator skill and refers to the ability to continuously listen to the group’s content whilst also hearing, acknowledging and working with the *here-and-now* processes taking place and the authors suggest this is crucial to the interventions success; (c) flexibility and confidence refer to the facilitators ability to engage in *dual attentiveness* while attending to the manual content, including the use or non-use of certain exercises and content depending on the dynamics of the particular group. Confidence is the capacity to be able to make flexible decisions, in the moment with appropriate rationale.

Kurz et al.’s (2020) research established that the practice of facilitators improved when they were trained in not simply the content but also process. The facilitators understanding of their role changed also, and after process-oriented training, they reported that delivering the programme content without considering process was inadequate for participants learning and that each member of the group had important roles to play. Finally, Borek et al (2019) found in their research examining the change process in groups, that facilitator characteristics such as interpersonal skills, cognitive and emotional factors (i.e., knowledge and empathy) and professional skills and experience are influential on the group and its ability to affect change. Similarly, Wong et al (2019) utilising a Delphi analysis identified four important areas of competency including (a) facilitating focused group discussion, (b) communication skills, (c) interpersonal style, and (d) session structure.

### **3.5.2 *Group atmosphere, cohesion and social support***

Facilitators, among their many roles, must also create a space where the participants feel they are in a trusting, safe, and supportive environment and can relate to the content (Kurz et al., 2020). Yalom and Leszcz (2005) report that there are benefits to utilising group therapy modality that cannot be achieved in an individual setting. Outside of cost savings they include several key features such as optimism, inclusion, group-based learning, shifting of self-focus, social/peer-support, interpersonal awareness and subsequent learning, group cohesiveness, and emotional processing in 'real life' terms. Groups are often considered useful because they act as a microcosm of life, whereby interpersonal abilities, social roles, and emotional processing are experienced in the moment. Ideally, they offer a safe place to process and practice new skills and have the potential to identify thoughts, emotions, and behaviours which may be unhelpful and are contributing to the presenting issue. Mielimaka et al (2010) found that those attending psychotherapy groups tended to engage in positive social supports outside of the group during and after attending the intervention. This research indicated that participants learnt to use others as a means of supporting positive change and that this had been modelled within the group setting. Moreover, the individuals who sought support from others (both social and professional) had better outcomes long-term.

Borek et al. (2019) explains that when effective group cohesion is created via the facilitator and general environment (space, time and level of comfort), this can create a social environment that fosters change processes. Moreover, the opposite is also true, when group cohesion is lacking or impeded it may inhibit the change process and also increase the likelihood of attrition. This emphasises the importance of group dynamics and atmosphere, as these factors are foundational to positive change processes and can be either related to

the facilitator (facilitator characteristics, techniques, and personality interactions between facilitator and participants) or context (social norms, cultural norms).

### **3.5.3 Fidelity**

Programme developers are often separate entities to those who deliver the programmes, be it psychologists, social workers, counsellors, or social service practitioners. Fidelity refers “to the extent to which an intervention is delivered as intended” (Sussman et al., 2006, p.28). A major concern for developers is the tendency for programme fidelity to decrease over time, as oversight decreases. This is often accompanied by increased content and process adaptation by either facilitators or organisation. It is not unreasonable to want to adapt a programme to more specifically fit the needs of the audience; however, as Fraser et al (2009, p. 16) points out “there is a dynamic tension between adaptation and fidelity”. Adaptation in this sense refers to the modifications made to a programme when both practice experience and empirical factors identify programme limitations. However, one cannot assume that the practitioner adapting the programme has either of these factors front of mind. Fixsen et al (2011) describe how fidelity is influenced by implementation drivers which are the factors that help or hinder the practitioners ability to deliver the programme as intended and include; the recruitment and training of qualified practitioners, support the practitioners receive from supervisors and administrators, and environmental factors such as where the programme is delivered, the organisation that delivers it, and the accessibility to the required technology and resources. Elliott and Mihalic (2004) explain that the reason fidelity is important to consider is that programme effectiveness has been found to be associated to fidelity. Later chapters including the discussion will discuss group process, prescription, and fidelity in relation to the current study.

This section highlights the many explicit and underlying factors and processes involved in facilitating an effective programme in order to foster group cohesion. It also details that successfully creating an effective group/social environment for participants enables more successful experiences, learnings, and likely outcomes for those participants involved. Moreover, this also demonstrates the many processes the Building Awesome Matua facilitators must execute during any given programme.

### **3.6 Present Study Objectives**

The objective of this study is to utilise the collaboration between practitioner(s) and researcher(s) to analyse and assess the current version of Building Awesome Matua. This project and collaboration is part of the programme lifecycle and anticipates that the results will inform future iterations of the programme as well as add to the literature on what elements contribute to successful facilitation of manualised programmes. This formative evaluation is organised around three core objectives - to examine (a) the goodness of fit, (b) efficacy, and (c) deliverability of the programme in its intended context. The definitions of each of this objectives is provided below:

#### **3.6.1 *Goodness of Fit:***

The relevance of cultural content and degree to which the overall curriculum built on themes of; whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, wairuatanga, ako, aroha, mana motuhake

#### **3.6.2 *Efficacy:***

- The belief (or disbelief) that the program as a whole has the ability to produce the desired results – a reduction in anger and family violence and associated risk factors, and an increase in whānau and community connectedness

- Facilitator's perspectives of the degree to which the programme is effective in helping participants achieve specific learning outcomes identified in each session of the programme manual

### **3.6.3 *Deliverability, logistics and fidelity:***

- Training and readiness to facilitate based on provided training (format and length) and materials and resources provided
- The process of building trust, respect and empathy among group members
- Logistical aspects including health and safety issues
- Fidelity or "the degree to which the programme can be delivered as it is intended" (Sussman et al., 2006, p.28).

## **4 Chapter Four: Methods**

### **4.1 Design.**

This chapter defines and describes the rationale, methodology and processes involved in conducting the current study relating to the Building Awesome Matua programme. The current research operates as a distinct project; however, it is working within a larger collaborative programme development and evaluation setting (Fetterman et al., 2014) that included key stakeholders from the Parenting Place, Salvation Army, and academic advisors from the University of Canterbury. As detailed in the previous chapter, alongside the process of programme development, a theory of change (ToC) model was developed for Building Awesome Matua. In this regard, the current study is the second of two planned evaluation studies which in part, test the Building Awesome Matua ToC.

Fraser et al (2009) described how intervention research generally has three main purposes; to develop and refine the intervention based on research and empirically grounded theory, to understand whether the intervention is effective in producing the desired outcomes, and to inform the broader conceptualisation of social and health problems, including theory on the subject. These three objectives cannot be achieved in one single study and must be part of a curated set of studies with different research designs. It is with this rationale the collaborators involved in the Building Awesome Matua evaluation proposed a series of studies described here. The first study (previously described on page 86) included mixed-methods questionnaires that participants were asked to complete both prior to, and immediately after their Building Awesome Matua course (Friesen, 2020). This study is described previously.

Methodological pluralism dictates that there are many ways in which knowledge can be garnered and subsequently developed (Fraser et al., 2009). Considering this and what is known about gathering and assessing knowledge in relation to intervention, both quantitative and qualitative methodologies are deemed valuable and purposeful. Fraser et al. also highlight that it is equally important in the early development and piloting of programmes to assess and revise the program deliverability, materials, and resources. The materials and resources are considered the defining features of the intervention in regard to deliverability because these directly instruct and impact the person delivering the programme. This, in turn, impacts the specifics of the message and learnings programme developers endeavour to convey.

Building Awesome Matua is in the early stages of its development, and the research team's strategy aligns with the viewpoint that programme and manual development should be iterative and recursive, rather than sequential and infrequent. Fraser et al. (2009) indicate that qualitative measurement strategies are particularly useful for efficacy studies and pilot studies where programme components are being formulated and revised. The authors also share that this type of research design is the best approach when attempting to understand the quality of programme implementation. Moreover, qualitatively designed approaches to research are considered the most flexible and appropriate method when considering the principles of Kaupapa Māori research (Barnes, 2000). Smith (1999) describes Kaupapa Māori research as research delivered by Māori, for Māori communities, and in conjunction with Māori. According to that narrow definition, the current study would not be considered Kaupapa Māori research and certainly does not claim to be. Jones (2017) describes that there is still space for non-Māori to collaborate with Māori when it is conducted according to Kaupapa Māori principles. Kaupapa methodology is built upon



prioritising the legitimacy of te ao Māori (Māori worldview) including Māori philosophies, knowledge, and values (Pihama, 2012). When research stems from the Māori community and the researcher is dedicated to tino rangatiratanga (self-determination) for Māori in the process, and is guided by Kaupapa Māori principles, then an ethical and productive bicultural research partnership can exist.

The current study has employed a qualitative methodology, utilising semi-structured interviews to address each of the key research questions identified above. We (the key stakeholders involved in this collaboration) felt that a qualitative methodology best maintained several of the following key Kaupapa Māori principles: Aroha ki te tangata, illustrates the importance of enabling respect and empowerment for people within the research process. He kanohi kitea (Smith, 2013), describes the importance of being a face that is seen and known to those who are participating in the research. Cram et al. (2006) describe “titiro, whakarongo...kōrero ” as to look, listen, and then later, speak. In this regard, researchers need to take time to understand people’s day-to-day realities, priorities, and aspirations. Kia tupato is the process of being cautious through ensuring culturally safe practices; and finally, through kia mahaki, researchers find ways of sharing their knowledge while remaining humble (Smith, 2013; Cram et al., 2006). These principles were employed to prioritise and uphold research that maintains a Kaupapa Māori focus, and to facilitate analysis of a culturally centred family violence intervention in the bicultural context of Aotearoa. The research aims to capture the individual experiences of the programme facilitators and this style of research (eliciting a narrative) also acts as a key way of feeding into the manual/programme lifecycle. Moreover, there is the anticipation that the results will inform future iterations of the programme as well as add to the literature on what elements contribute to successful facilitation of manualised programmes.

Finally, the rationale for utilising semi-structured interviews stems from Walker et al.'s (2006) writing, which described how quantitative surveys, experiments, and questionnaires are typically considered a Westernised approach to research. Approaches that sit more comfortably with Māori involve oral histories, narratives, or case studies in a setting where open discussion and sharing of stories is welcomed and respected. This data collection strategy also allows for manaakitanga. Manaakitanga is defined as “sharing, hosting and being generous. It supports collaborative research and evaluation and helps knowledge flow both ways between researcher/evaluator and participant” (Pipi, 2004, p. 7), and in the context of the interviews promotes the building of rapport. The ambition was to create an environment through the conversation between participants (Building Awesome Matua facilitators) and myself about their experiences of facilitating the programme that promotes the development of a rich narrative to inform careful formative evaluation.

#### **4.1.1 Ethical Considerations.**

This study was approved by the University of Canterbury Ethics Committee. Both before, and during the process of gaining approval by the Ethics Committee there were a number of factors that needed to be considered. The information shared by the facilitators was vital to the development of the programme. It was hypothesised that the information garnered from the interviews was likely to contain both praise and critiques of the programme. As this is a formative evaluation, the critiques of the programme will likely add value to future iterations. However, the researchers needed to be cognizant of the implications of asking facilitators to critique the programme. Conflicts of interest for facilitators were considered as it may have biased the responses. It would not be unreasonable to expect that some facilitators have a relationship or connection with either other facilitators or with people on the development team.

In light of this, the current research employed several approaches to decrease response bias and to uphold the privacy and anonymity of the participants in an attempt to gather rich responses and honest critique. Firstly, as part of informed consent, participants were informed that the collective results from the interviews would likely be disseminated in various formats; including the current Masters thesis, other academic publications (journal articles, conference presentations), and most importantly, shared with the Building Awesome Matua working group, and would likely inform further development of Building Awesome Matua content and/or processes. Participants were also informed they were not under any obligation to participate in the study and termination of their participation was possible at any time during the data collection process and up until the data had been analysed. Secondly, in order to recognise the sensitive nature of the information that would be discussed during the interview, participants were informed that all information in the interview would be anonymised and their confidentiality would be protected in the thesis and in any other reports from this study.

Finally, to uphold the principle of whakawhanaungatanga, (the process of establishing relationships, or relating well to others) the interviewer carefully applied the Hui Process (Lacey et al., 2011), which is described later in this chapter under “Interview Design and Procedures”. According to Bishop (1996, p. 238), whakawhanaungatanga dictates that the relationship between the researcher and Māori research participants be characterised by “connectedness, engagement, and participatory consciousness”. In Western research, the researchers are framed as an “objective” party who is impartial and places distance between oneself, the participants, and their responses. Ultimately, the objective stance is likely not to serve the nature of this research, and equally overfamiliarity may also be inappropriate. Therefore, one aspect of whakawhanaungatanga in this study

involved meeting participants face-to-face, where possible, at a place which they deemed comfortable and professional (for the two of the five interviews that were completed face-to-face, both facilitators chose their place of work).

**Supervision.** As described earlier, Kaupapa Māori research by definition needs to stem from the Māori community first and foremost. Therefore, the development of Building Awesome Matua's evaluation framework was co-developed across the three key organisations (Parenting Place, Salvation Army, and academic advisors from the University of Canterbury) collaborating with key Māori staff who played a fundamental role in this process. Once the framework was developed, the supervision for the day-to-day running of the project was managed by both Pākehā and Māori supervisors.

#### **4.1.2 Recruitment.**

The facilitators of Building Awesome Matua were recruited as the participants for this study. The recruitment process involved the "Implementation Manager" from The Parenting Place emailing all current facilitators that met the inclusion criteria with an invitation to participate, as well as an information sheet detailing the nature of the research. Facilitators who were interested were asked to initiate the process by emailing me directly in order to maintain their confidentiality. Every facilitator had the right to be included (granted they meet the inclusion criteria), and the right to decline participation, and facilitators were assured that there were no ramifications to their relationship with Parenting Place or Salvation Army if they declined.

Inclusion criteria included facilitating at least one full (8-12 week) programme from start to finish through any of the approved service providers in the last three months (for example; contractors to Corrections, the Salvation Army, or other community partner organisations), the facilitators must have completed the two-day training workshop, be over

18 years of age, and provided informed consent. Exclusion criteria included any facilitators who had previously taken the course themselves as a Building Awesome Matua participant.

#### **4.1.3 Participants.**

The participants in this study were five male facilitators, representing 30% of all the active facilitators at the time for Building Awesome Matua. Facilitators may deliver the programme in any one of three settings; community organisations where Building Awesome Matua stands as part of their standard social services, in correctional settings, or the Salvation Army. The number of Building Awesome Matua programmes that each facilitators had facilitated ranged from 1 to approximately 8-10. Demographic information including age, ethnicity, and professional/personal experience were not formally queried in order to protect the confidentiality of the participants.

#### **4.2 Interview Design and Procedures.**

In preparation for the creation of the interview schedule and the interviews themselves, I attended one of the two-day facilitator training sessions which covered the entirety of the Building Awesome Matua programme. This not only provided a good perspective about what the facilitators experience, but also provided the opportunity to meet and build relationships with the new facilitators. After attending the training, I proceeded to construct the interview schedule. Many of the facilitators (but not all) were Māori, and the fundamental nature of Building Awesome Matua is built on the foundations of te ao Māori. Therefore, the foundations of the interview questions needed to include the principles inherent in Kaupapa Māori research and to respect the validity of mātauranga Māori (Pitama et al., 2002). In order to respect and uphold the mana of the knowledge shared, I employed the Hui Process and complementary framework, the Meihana Model.

The Hui Process was utilised throughout the semi-structured interviews as a guide to organise the discussion. The Hui Process (Lacey et al., 2011) highlights four key stages within the interview process, integrating the appropriate traditional practices, or tikanga, within each stage. The four stages of the Hui Process are Mihi (introduction of interviewer/research, purpose of study, consent, and confidentiality statement), Whakawhanaungatanga (establishing connection), Kaupapa (the purpose of the encounter, the interview), and Poroporaki (summary, conclusion and next steps). Additionally, The Meihana Model is used extensively in health settings as an aid to enhance doctor-patient relationships and to facilitate a better conceptual understanding of the Māori worldview of health and journey to well-being for doctors and practitioners (Pitama et al., 2014). The Meihana Model was used at the interview question creation stage as a conceptual and practical framework for me to crosscheck and ensure that the Māori view of health and well-being (Te Whare Tapa Whā), and challenges on this journey, were considered and applied.

The interview was semi-structured, containing 11 core questions, with potential follow up questions attached to each of these. The interview protocol (Table 4.1) details each specific element of the Hui Process and verbatim questioning used for each of the interviews. The interview questions, process, and subsequent schedule outlined in Table 4.1 were developed by myself, in consultation with Māori supervisors and alongside the working group to ensure they were appropriate for the facilitators and fit for the purpose of the study. The facilitators were interviewed either over Zoom (a video conferencing platform similar to Skype), or in person. The consent form was signed and received prior to the interview, but the key ideas from the information sheet were reviewed prior to beginning the interview. The interview protocol details the Hui Process in the context of the

interviews and indicates how we balanced this whilst maintaining the ethical standards in conducting research. I opened with a mihi, with the offering of opening with a karakia (prayer) or whakataukī. I shared how I came to be involved in the project, my professional/academic background and gave some context to the interview and research itself. The second stage, whakawhanaungatanga, involved sharing information about myself, my connections, family, and work. This is a reciprocal process and each facilitator also shared information about their whakapapa, family, whānau and anything else they felt comfortable sharing. A koha was given to each of the facilitators for their participation in the project and to show unconditional gratitude for their involvement throughout.

The Kaupapa element of the mihi process is ultimately the purpose of the encounter, which in this instance began with summarising and checking understanding regarding the details of consent and the nature of confidentiality. This also was an opportunity for the interviewer to describe what the interview will entail and offer the facilitator the opportunity to ask any questions before getting started. I spent time before commencing the interview to ensure all questions about the process were answered, the process was clear, and connections were made in order to build rapport and to make the process comfortable for the facilitators. It was important to create a space where the facilitators felt as though they could share both their positive and negative experiences of delivering the programme, therefore I emphasized the details around privacy and confidentiality of the interview.

The interview itself began with questions relating to the first objective of the current study; understanding the goodness of fit in regard to the Māori values imbedded in the programme. This was achieved by reviewing these values in the Building Awesome Matua curriculum with the facilitator. Each of the values were described to the facilitator as

Building Awesome Matua defines them in the manual. The purpose of this is because these terms also have general definitions used as words in te reo Māori. For example, whanaungatanga generally can be defined as “relationships, kinship, sense of family connection” (Māori dictionary, n.d.). However, in the context of Building Awesome Matua, whanaungatanga is a core value which is applied “through highlighting the interwoven series of relationships that places fathers and their families at the centre” (Building Awesome Matua manual, 2018). The interview protocol (Table 4.1) demonstrates the verbatim explanation and questioning utilising whanaungatanga as an example. When we had finished the original question, I would then move on to the following value and go through the same process of defining the value as described in the manual and following on with subsequent questions. The full list of interview questions and schedule can be found in Appendix A.

The interview then moved into more specific questions regarding objective two (efficacy), and objective three (deliverability, logistics, and fidelity). Semi-structured interviews by design tend to be fluid in order to allow for a natural conversational flow. For this reason, no one interview is exactly the same as another. Therefore, as shown in the interview protocol, several follow up questions were mapped out to be used if necessary or relevant. The follow-up questions included; “Do you have any examples of [topic being discussed]?”, “What aspects of the programme help achieve this?” or “Can you think of specific resources from the programme?”. The facilitators were well versed in describing and explaining how they perceived most elements in the programme.

Once I had identified that the salient aspects for addressing each question had been covered by the facilitator, we would move on to the next question. The final stage of the interviews, Poroporoaki, involved a debrief of what was shared and the reiteration of how



valuable the facilitator's contribution was. I then described the next step, transcription, and offered each participant the opportunity to review their transcribed interview, of which no one chose to do so. Finally, where appropriate (i.e., if the facilitator wanted to open with karakia) we closed with karakia to finish the interview. Overall, the interviews took between 1.5 and 2 hours. Of note, it was clear that the facilitators who had more experience facilitating the programme, had more feedback and reflections on the process.

**Table 4.1: Current Study - Interview Protocol**

| Interviewer question structure  | Interviewer verbatim questioning  |
|---|---|
| <p><b>MIHI/WHAKAWHANAUNGATANGA</b><br/>Interviewer introduction (mihi) and whakawhanaungatanga:</p> <p>Present the facilitator with a koha and offer kai</p>  | <p>I began by providing participants with the option to begin with something such as a karakia or a pepeha and engaged in the process of whakawhanaungatanga. I introduced myself in English and discussed how I came to be involved in this project, clarified my role and the role of the other investigators (principal investigator and supervisors). I asked the facilitators about themselves and about their experience, this was an informal discussion and it was highlighted to the facilitator that this information will not be recorded or included in the research.</p> <p>I thanked the facilitator for being a part of the research and presented them with a koha to show appreciation for their time and generous contribution. When the interviews were in person, kai was shared with the facilitator.</p>  |
| <p><b>CONFIDENTIALLY STATEMENT</b><br/>Provide/review information and consent form</p>  | <p>I reviewed all of the information on the consent form with the participant and confirmed the participants' consent to participate in the research. Documentation was signed and dated. I then described how semi structured interviews works and explained that even though the interview was being recorded questions from the participants to the interviewer can still be answered or clarification can be given. I also explained that there is no obligation to answer the questions and the facilitator can ask to move to the next question should they wish to do so. Finally, I asked whether there were any questions before we began.</p>   |
| <p><b>KAUPAPA</b></p> <p><b>Objective One:</b> Goodness of fit in regard to the Māori values imbedded in the programme.</p> <p>Introduction to Building Awesome Matua core values and subsequent questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. whanaungatanga</li> <li>2. manaakitanga</li> <li>3. wairuatanga</li> <li>4. aroha</li> <li>5. ako</li> <li>6. mana motuhake</li> </ol> | <p>"Building Awesome Matua is built on the themes of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, wairuatanga, ako, aroha, mana motuhake.</p> <p>What I'd like to do is walk through these themes one-by-one, firstly explaining how Breakthrough defines each theme and how it is related to the programme. For each value we will go through a set of questions"</p> <p>Starting with [<b>whanaungatanga</b>] – Breakthrough describes this as ["Interconnected, reciprocal relationships that contribute to the whole."]</p> <p>And in relation to Building Awesome Matua it is applied through highlighting the interwoven series of relationships that places fathers and their families at the centre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you explain how you feel this is (or isn't) addressed in the programme content and whether the participants responded well to this concept?</li> <li>• Do you have any examples of how participants received or interacted with these ideas? Or any memorable conversations you may have had about the whanaungatanga and the place of the father within this?</li> <li>• Do you have any suggestions on how this could be strengthened or any additions to this concept?</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Objective Two:</b> Understanding whether the programme is efficacious in three key outcomes</p>   | <p>"For these questions, I'd like you to think of the programme as a whole"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the goals of the programme is to increase parental efficacy by teaching parenting skills. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Thinking about the participants who complete the course, how well do you think Breakthrough facilitates learning parenting skills?</li> <li>○ What aspects of the programme help achieve this? Can you think of specific elements of the programme?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Another goal is to improve whānau relationships. How do you feel the programme improves whānau relationship quality and can you think of any specific examples or what in the programme helps achieve this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If response is “not well” then follow up with; How could this element be strengthened?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Reduction in anger. How well do you feel the programme facilitates a reduction in anger, and other violence related risk factors and what in the programme helps achieve this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If response is “not well” then follow up with; How could this element be strengthened?”</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <b>Objective Three:</b> Deliverability, Logistics and Fidelity<br><b>Objective Two:</b> Efficacy | <p>“Now I’d like us to discuss the process of facilitating a group parenting course with its unique focus and objectives;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In terms of group dynamics and building relationships with and between participants. How easy or hard was it building trust, respect, and empathy among groups members? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Follow up: What was helpful in facilitating this?</li> <li>○ What did you find challenging during this process and why?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• During the assessment, enrolment and duration of the programme were there any elements that hindered how you delivered the programme or engaged with the participants?”</li> </ul>                          |
| <b>PORROROAKI</b>  | Debriefing, time for any further questions from the facilitator and final thank you and appreciation shared.   |

### 4.3 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis (TA; Braun & Clark, 2006) was chosen as the data analysis strategy for this study because it provided a flexible framework in which the researcher could apply Māori concepts and themes (with the consultation of Māori supervisors and collaborators involved in the project). Braun and Clark (2006) describe two distinct ways to identify themes or patterns in data; an inductive, bottom-up approach, and a deductive, top-down approach. An inductive approach is not bound by an a priori coding framework, whereas an deductive approach is driven by the “researcher’s theoretical or analytic interest in the area” and is more interested in processing the data as it relates to theoretical perspectives, specific hypotheses, or the research questions (p.84).

In the initial phase of analysis, I used an inductive approach, in that I surveyed the data generally for themes without trying to fit the data into a pre-existing frame. Braun and

Clark (2006, p.83) state “an inductive approach means the themes are strongly linked to the data themselves”. The authors also highlight that there is the possibility the themes discovered may bear little likeness to the specific questions asked during the interview. In the current study, the themes that manifested from this process were true to what Braun and Clarke (2006) described, and the facilitators emphasised four themes in their interviews. The inductive element provided the opportunity to actively honour the facilitators’ collective voice and respect the values inherent in the philosophy of ako. Ako, as will be described in detail in the results section, is the concept of reciprocal learning regarding the learning and teaching relationship, whereby both parties teach and learn from each other (Ka Hikitia, 2008). This value is relevant at many stages of the current study. For example, within the interviews, the research and process in collaborating and seeking feedback supports the notion of ako, and within the interviews the facilitators describe its importance for them as practitioners to be able to share their viewpoints and experiences. The four themes uncovered the salient values and processes the facilitators engaged with and reflected on during our interview and allowed themes to be shaped around what the facilitators identified as important to them outside of my own research objectives. This also upholds the Kaupapa Māori research principle described earlier of titiro, whakarongo...kōrero ; to look, listen, and then later, to speak (Cram et al., 2006). The totality of this process and the four themes creates a process of aratakitanga. Aratakitanga means guidance and acts as an apt description of the journey the facilitators shared by guiding me through their experiences of facilitating the programme.

In contrast to the inductive approach, deductive TA was organised around the current research objectives and its summation creates the formative evaluation. We were interested in understanding and organising the narrative of participants into themes based on the 11 key questions described above in the Present Study. Table 4.2 below outlines the phased approach proposed by Braun and Clark (2006) which I used as the guiding framework for the data analysis across both the inductive and deductive analyses.

| Phase                                     | Description of the process   |
|---|--|
| 1. Familiarizing yourself with your data: | Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.  |
| 2. Generating initial codes:              | Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.  |
| 3. Searching for themes:                  | Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.  |
| 4. Reviewing themes:                      | Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.  |
| 5. Defining and naming themes:            | Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.   |
| 6. Producing the report:                  | The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis. |

Table 4.2: Braun and Clark (2006) *The Six Phases of Theoretical Thematic Analysis* p. 87

*Phase one: Familiarising yourself with your data.* I conducted all of the interviews and subsequently transcribed the audio recordings in an orthographic, verbatim style. This stage is considered by some researchers as “a key phase of data analysis within interpretative qualitative methodology” because when the researcher themselves delves into this process they are in turn committing an “interpretive act” (Bird, 2005, p. 227). I made the concerted effort to take notice and take note of common and topical elements from the kōrero in the form of a spreadsheet, writing each new key concept in a column. Once the interviews were transcribed, so began the process described by Braun and Clarke (2006, p.86); a search for “patterns of meaning and issues of potential interest in the data”. I familiarised myself with each of the interviews by reading, reflecting on the conversations I had around these topics, re-reading and comparing segments of the transcripts across

interviews. I also refined an initial list of ideas by searching for key words/concepts in the spreadsheet, removing redundancies, and collapsing similar ideas into one. For example, Jordan stated in reference to aroha, “Because it seems quite natural, quite easy for everything to be directed back to aroha”. The initial draft code I gave this statement was “Aroha is an easily accessible concept”. As I moved through each of the interviews, I was cognizant of this idea and watchful for similar and differing ideas in relation to aroha. I subsequently coded two other facilitator statements with the same code including Tamati’s statement “Concepts like aroha, everyone can relate to aroha”. Ideally each of the interviews would have been completed before this process began; however, due to the length of time between interviews this process began with the first three interviews and then continued once the remaining two were complete.

*Phase two: Generating initial codes.* Once the initial list was created and I had a general concept of what ideas were present in the data, the formal coding began. According to Boyatzis (1998, p.63), coding refers to “the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon”. The coding process was complex because of the nature of the interviews, in the sense that they were longer, more detailed, and more idiosyncratic than anticipated. Firstly, I approached the data inductively, identifying codes which arose from the facilitators’ narrative, rather than organising the codes around the interests of my research objectives. I coded as many potential themes/patterns from the outset in a systematic way, manually creating and entering codes and data extracts into the spreadsheet based on the initial draft codes and adding additional codes that were identified throughout the process. From here I iteratively “tidied” the codes, further ensuring these codes aligned with Boyatzis’ definition,

keeping them at a basic and fundamental level. An example of the codes can be found in Table 4.3 below.

**Table 4-3**

*Example of codes*

| Code Number | Description   |
|-------------|---|
| 9           | Using traditional Māori text, stories and mythology creates a springboard for the participants to non-judgementally reflect on their family's current context |
| 16          | (Re)defining aroha for the participants is key  |
| 21          | The facilitator is not the expert, it's through autonomy and non-judgement the participants can connect   |
| 149         | The facilitator works to his strengths as well as the participants needs  |

Secondly, the deductive approach was organised around the three core objectives of the current study, made up of the 11 questions listed in Table X. I systematically surveyed one question at a time across all five interviews and continued the aforementioned process of creating draft codes, removing redundancies and collapsing similar ideas into one. I also utilised the codes from the inductive coding process where relevant because there was natural crossover in ideas. Additionally, for both the inductive and deductive process, data extracts may have been coded as feeding into more than one theme, meaning that extracts may be uncoded, coded once, or coded many times, as appropriate. All five interviews were coded in this manner which produced approximately 200-220 (inductive and deductive) draft codes which were subsequently edited down to approximately 160 finalised codes. Below (Table 4.4) is an example of how the interview transcripts were coded deductively specifying the interview question, facilitator response, codes, and how the codes apply to the facilitator response.

**Table 4-4**

*Example of coded transcript*

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Objective One – Interviewer Question:</b><br>“Starting with [whanaungatanga]; Building Awesome Matua describes this as “Interconnected, reciprocal relationships that contribute to the whole”. And in relation to Building Awesome Matua it is applied through highlighting the interwoven series of relationships that places fathers and their families at the centre. Can you explain how you feel this is (or isn’t) addressed in the programme content and whether the participants responded well to this concept?”   |   |
| <b>Facilitator Response</b>   | <b>Codes</b>  |
| Jordan “Right, whanaungatanga, I feel that it’s a solid foundation of Building Awesome Matua, I guess it’s from session 1 all the way until they graduate, it’s just an extension of that theme. With the participants, in my experience there just seems to be that natural occurrence of building rapport amongst each other, and I see that as whanaungatanga, We kinda learn more about each other as we go through the content, as we go through the manuals. So, I think it features quite heavily even though it may not be labelled as whanaungatanga it’s just included, whether it’s the videos, whether it’s the material. | Code #1: Whanaungatanga is a foundational feature of the programme  |
|   | Code #2: Whanaungatanga is relevant across and throughout the whole programme   |
|   | Code #3: Whanaungatanga is something that occurs organically throughout the programme   |
|   | Code #105: Whanaungatanga is an inherent component in the programme   |
| <b>Codes</b>  | <b>Breakdown of which codes apply to which part of the response</b>   |
| Code #1: Whanaungatanga is a foundational feature of the programme  | “Right, whanaungatanga, I feel that it’s a solid foundation of Building Awesome Matua”  |
| Code #2: Whanaungatanga is relevant across and throughout the whole programme   | “I guess it’s from session 1 all the way until they graduate, it’s just an extension of that theme.”  |
| Code #3: Whanaungatanga is something that occurs organically throughout the programme   | “With the participants, in my experience there just seems to be that natural occurrence of building rapport amongst each other and I see that as whanaungatanga, We kinda learn more about each other as we go through the content, as we go through the manuals” |
| Code #105: Whanaungatanga is an inherent component in the programme   | “So, I think it features quite heavily even though it may not be labelled as whanaungatanga it’s just included, whether it’s the videos, whether it’s the material.”  |



Phase three: Searching for themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) describe this phase as the stage to re-focus the analysis, starting the process of searching for themes coming through from the data. This phase included combining the different codes to create overarching themes. Here the decision also needed to be made as to whether I used a “semantic” or “latent” approach to identifying themes. The semantic approach consists of identifying explicit or surface meanings of the data, whereas the latent level goes beyond this and examines the underlying ideas, assumptions and ideologies that form the content of the data (Braun & Clark, 2006). The latent approach was taken because of the style of communication consistent among the facilitators. Traditionally, Māori passed down their teachings and learnings orally, utilising metaphors and stories to convey information. McRae (2017, p.5) states “today, in the twenty-first century, when Māori gather on their tribal marae (ceremonial meeting-grounds), the oral legacy can be heard in speeches, songs, and prayers, and in the performative, metaphorical, and esoteric character of their language”. This style of utilising metaphors and stories was present throughout each of the interviews; thus, any attempt to develop semantic themes would have been futile.

Thematic maps are the suggested methodology for sorting and organising themes; however, because of the variety, length, and nature of the data, a complimentary strategy was applied. Each code was cross referenced across all transcripts. If the code appeared in one transcript I searched the remaining transcripts for similar codes and/or information which may compliment or match under a theme. For example; the code “The facilitator wants to uphold the voices of their participants” was identified in the first participant’s transcript and entered into the spreadsheet as “code #25”. A subsequent search across the remaining transcripts was then undertaken, identifying the code occurring in three of the five transcripts. Each code was then amalgamated with other similar ideas to test out its

potential to form a theme. This particular code (code #25) for example was subsumed into the arataki theme “Arataki Theme Four. Mahi tahi: Building the therapeutic alliance, mutual aid and collaboration with facilitation skills”. This theme contains two key concepts often called “subthemes” (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The first concept relates to the value the facilitator places on developing the therapeutic alliance, and the second relates to the skills the facilitators utilise and draw on to engage in this process. Therefore, code #25 sits under the therapeutic alliance subtheme; Table 3 below provides an example of this code mapping and Figure 2 highlights how the codes contribute into subthemes which then contribute to final themes.

**Table 4-5**

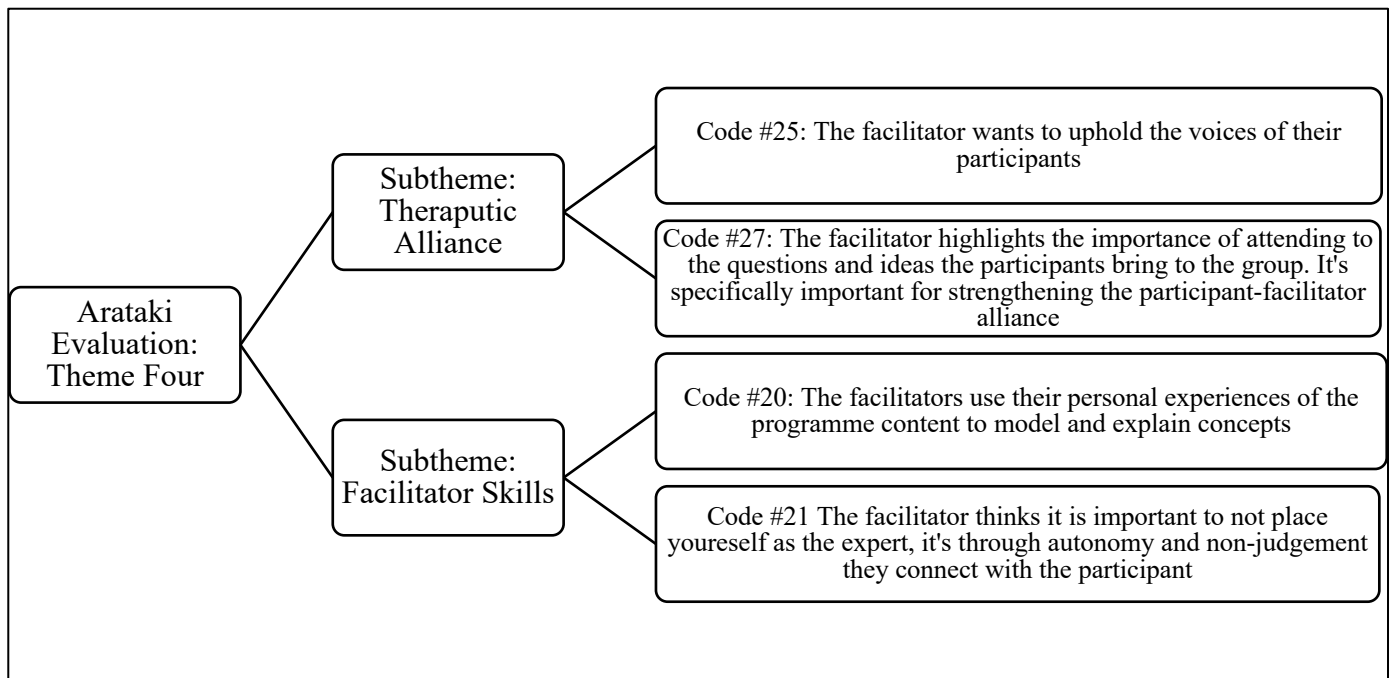
*Example of coding mapping process*

| Code Number | Description  | P1: Line Number | P2: Line Number | P3: Line Number | P4: Line Number | P5: Line Number | Total Occurrences |
|-------------|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 25          | The facilitator wants to uphold the voices of their participants | 348-351         | 322-334         | 297-302         |                 |                 | 3                 |

In addition, any interesting data extracts that applied to a specific theme were also entered to provide evidence of the importance and context of the code. This phase resulted in the creation of all possible themes without excluding any information. The initial list of themes totalled approximately 15-20. Several themes were then identified as subthemes which contributed to a broader idea, rather than being a theme in and of itself. Figure 2 exemplifies this process which lead to the final themes presented in the results section.

**Figure 1.6**

*Developed thematic map, showing final theme for the aratakitanga evaluation*



*Phase four: Reviewing themes.* This stage includes two levels of processing (Braun & Clark, 2006); The first level of analysis involves the data within themes being checked for coherence and whether it is meaningful to the theme itself. Multiple themes were analysed to ensure they were clearly identifiable from one another. Patton (1990) describes the criteria for judging categories as internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity respectively. The process of refinement also works to identify problematic, ill-fitting themes, or themes that should be discarded because of lack of data. This resulted in the creation of a set of ‘candidate themes’. For example, I identified that the facilitators consistently emphasised the importance and ubiquity of “aroha” in the programme. I began by

searching all of the codes relating to aroha, the codes were read, and re-read and an initial theme was hypothesised regarding the importance of aroha in the programme. I then stripped away all of the codes which did not link into this theme and consequently re-read the transcripts to ensure all available data was encapsulated under this theme. Once all relevant data was included, I assessed whether there was enough data to qualify it as a theme (based on the collated data excerpts and number of facilitators included in the theme). This hypothesised theme was subsequently reshaped into the candidate theme of “Overarching Aroha: I thought I knew what love was”. I had identified that the facilitators were not simply describing the ubiquity of aroha they were also describing the parallel and underlying process of working towards reimagining its definition.

Level two of this analysis then moves on to further reviewing and refining the candidate themes with specific emphasis on the entire data set. This essentially is an opportunity to ensure that the themes themselves communicate what was shared by the facilitators in the most authentic way. This process was less linear and consisted of multiple iterations and conceptualisations of the themes, and re-organising of information. Themes were shared and discussed with both the primary and secondary supervisors and themes were also cross-checked in-order to assess reliability across the data set.

*Phase five: Defining and naming themes.* The final phase before producing the written report requires the researcher to identify the essence of what each theme is about. Awareness at this point was critical, as there is a balance between pushing the theme to do too much and not analysing each theme with enough depth. I went back through the themes and identified what is of interest about them and why this is important to the current research. This stage is the story telling element for each of the themes, both separate from and connected to the objectives of the research. This process was conducted

with consultation from the cultural supervisor, Te Hurinui, on the cultural components of the themes (names, appropriateness of te reo and whakataukī throughout).

Finally, the questions posed were organised by the objectives of the Building Awesome Matua programme; however, it was anticipated that the responses from the facilitators and derived themes may not directly or neatly reflect the questions asked. Therefore, it was important to choose an approach which allowed for flexibility. In light of this, I employed negative case analysis as a method to examine data that may outlie the preconceived hypotheses. Allen (2017, p. 3) states that negative case analysis is the process of “identifying negative, deviant, discomforting cases; those that do not fit the initially formulated hypotheses...”. In the context of the current research this meant that the researcher was cognizant of particular themes or information that did not fit within the Building Awesome Matua Theory of Change rationale and in-turn, where relevant, created new themes. This technique endeavoured to decrease the likelihood that information was shoehorned into themes which may not be wholly appropriate, whilst it also allowed for new information to be identified, organised and discussed. Allen (2017) also explains that utilising this method can increase reliability and validity of the results by insuring that all the available data is processed and coded (themed) as close to representing the raw data (facilitator narrative) as possible. In essence, negative case analysis allows space for all information that is shared and allows both deductive and inductive methods to be utilised whilst maintaining quality in data analysis.

The methods section above describes the manner in which the analysis of this qualitative interview data was managed in order to most effectively address the aims of this study. As discussed, the goal of the analysis was to identify both manifest and latent themes across participants’ interviews as related to each of the research questions. An essential

characteristic of these themes is that they maintain the kaupapa of this project, by respecting the mana of the programme facilitators, their experience in delivering the programme, and as kaiārahi (leaders, guides, mentors) in their communities. The themes were born from the narrative of the facilitators' interviews and their description of their personal experience facilitating the programme, observations of participant experiences, administrative processes, and reflections on programme successes and challenges. The Arataki Evaluation gets at the heart of the group processes, personal experiences, and facilitators' appraisals of the programme; the nature of which was more abstract, fluid, and at times idiosyncratic from one participant to the next. In contrast, the Formative Evaluation relates more to the practice and procedures of facilitating the programme, including administrative processes, group procedures, and logistics. This part of the evaluation is also helpful in understanding the applicability and utility of the Building Awesome Matua ToC of which valuable insights were garnered. These are discussed in the Discussion chapter (Chapter Six). The Formative Evaluation fundamentally highlights what elements contribute to successful facilitation of Building Awesome Matua, which may also generalise to other similar style support group or therapeutic manualised programmes.

This analysis unearthed a series of themes that on the whole highlight the experience of the facilitators as they shared their story of what it means to facilitate Building Awesome Matua. Although the interviews were intended to be semi-structured, in reality the conversation had a natural flow that was largely guided by the participants with prompts and follow-up questions posed by myself to make sure each key aim of the study was addressed. Thus, the information for the Arataki Evaluation and the Formative Evaluation sections in the following Results Chapter is drawn from diverse moments across each of the interviews based on how the conversation evolved. The facilitators provided a

rich range of responses, experiences, and appraisals of the programme. Whilst analysing the data it became clear that the facilitators interviewed are people who have arrived at this space and time with their own experiences, stories, careers, and personal aspirations, and each of the facilitators engage with the programme based on these experiences and perspectives which likely shapes their approach to facilitation. In some cases, the facilitators shared that this is in part the reason they believe in the kaupapa of the programme. They have the ability to use this forum in conjunction with their lived personal and professional experiences and to ultimately connect with the programme participants in a way that has not been possible for the facilitators before.

## **5 Chapter Five: Results.**

To preface these results, please note that I have chosen to apply titles to many of the themes from the analyses in both te reo Māori and English. Bowling (1997) defines research as a “systematic and rigorous process of enquiry” (p.14) and describes how this process of enquiry and the way in which it is communicated is influenced by one’s worldview. Our worldview in turn influences our perceptions, judgements, and understanding of the information described. Although Māori and non-Māori have grown accustomed to co-existing within the same society, when presented with the same information it is still possible for Māori and non-Māori to arrive at different understandings. Pere and Barnes (2009) discuss the importance of acknowledging the potential for these different understandings to develop in research and to try and minimise this by carefully incorporating both Māori and non-Māori concepts. Pitama et al. (2002) share that Māori ideologies or themes are considered to be best explained in Māori language because it provides the richest pathway to the histories, values, and beliefs of Māori people. Considering this, each theme is accompanied by a whakataukī, karakia, or piece of Māori text which is embedded into the meaning portrayed in the theme and also translated into English.

### **5.1 Formative and Arataki Evaluation.**

As described above, the deductive process uncovered elements relating to the practice and procedures of facilitating the programme, including administrative processes, group processes/procedures, and logistics. The summation of these elements resulted in the formative evaluation, which aims to ensure specific goals and objectives of the research are being met, whilst also identifying the limitations and areas for growth that the facilitators



described (Christ & Kember, 2018). It is important to highlight that this section, and the discussion section does not intend to provide recommendations of specific changes that could be made, and leaves the interpretation of the results, in an applied sense, to the programme development team.

## **5.2 Research Objective – Understanding Goodness of Fit**

Building Awesome Matua is underpinned by six fundamental values consisting of whanaungatanga, aroha, ako, manaakitanga, wairuatanga, and mana motuhake. To address objective one, *Goodness of Fit*, I examined two core questions. First, what is the relevance and utility of these six values to the facilitator in facilitating the programme? Second, to what degree is the overall curriculum built on these values? For each of the below subsections these two questions were posed to the facilitators, and through the process of deductive TA (described above) the themes below were identified.

### **5.2.1 Aroha - I thought I knew what love was.**

**Ko te pae tawhiti arumia kia tata. Ko te pae tata whakamaui. Kia puta i te wheiao ki to ao mārama.**

Seek to bring the distant horizon nearer. Grasp it firmly once near. And so emerge from darkness into enlightenment.

**Building Awesome Matua Context.** Aroha, is arguably the most common word in both the programme manual and in the facilitator transcripts. The root word “aro” means “to face, turn towards, take heed, take notice of, pay attention to, consider” (Māori Dictionary, n.d.). “Ha” refers to the breath of life, and the essence of life (Building Awesome Matua, video resource, 2018; Māori Dictionary, n.d.). The key contributor to the Building Awesome Matua programme content, a Māori kaumatua, gives an example of aroha operating within whānau relationships, and states; “aroha is an attraction, it’s not

something we go and strive after, it's something that compels us toward it.... aroha is recognising and honouring the essence of the other, our words will show that honour, the things we say, how we say it, the emphasis behind what we say... [if we're] separated from the presence of aroha, the consequence of that, [is] broken relationships".

In another section of the Building Awesome Matua manual, a metaphor is adopted to highlight a key concept of aroha; "The Compass of Love", is a reminder for fathers to turn towards aroha, as the true North for gaining perspective on family dynamics in challenging times. The manual explains:

*"When you are lost at sea or in the bush and you don't know which way to go, a compass is very useful. There are lots of times in our parenting journey when we can feel lost – we hit a situation and we don't know what to do. For example, when they [child] disappoint us, when they are unkind, when we have a hard family decision to make. When you are lost like that, look at your compass – and a parent's compass is always aroha. Head in the direction of aroha, do the loving thing that honours your child, and at the very least, it will get you heading in the right direction until you get a clearer idea of what to do." (Building Awesome Matua Programme Manual, 2018)*

Aroha features most prominently in "Rua (Session Two): Foundations of Aroha" and the concept or notion of "turning towards aroha" is utilised throughout the programme.

Rua consists of four key learning outcomes: (a) to have a deeper understanding of kia arohatia (to love) and aroha – unconditional vs. conditional love; (b) to have a deeper understanding of secure attachment and emotional security; (c) to adopt strategies to improve the quality of your relationship with your Tamariki; and finally (d) to learn about Te Whare Tapa Whā and how to use it as restorative tikanga (Building Awesome Matua programme manual, 2018, p.11). The session moves through several key phases working to define/redefine aroha, offering insight into how and why this is important to the child's development and how it may positively or negatively impact them. Finally, the programme demonstrates several tools including Te Whare Tapa Whā to operationalise the concept of

aroha in a practical sense, whilst building a means of measuring whether this is being achieved by the participant. Overall, the aroha kōrero and the manual content communicates that Building Awesome Matua endorses the viewpoint, that aroha is not only a feeling one has toward another, but also an interactive process within and between people, a guiding principle of the programme and a way of facilitating understanding of oneself in relation to others.

**Facilitators' Perspectives.** As the theme “I thought I knew what love was” came to the fore, the whakataukī above spoke to the process of identifying, reflecting, and proactively seeking new knowledge and ways of feeling, behaving, and understanding aroha. William’s quote from one of his participants reflects this need to help participants develop a new understanding of aroha that was prominent in this theme;

*“My father was violent, you know, and I thought getting a hiding was love. Cause that’s the only time he’d physically be there or be giving me any sort of attention” – William sharing a statement shared by a Building Awesome Matua participant*

Each of the facilitators described aroha as a fundamental introduction to the programme and a concept that is often revisited throughout the sessions. The facilitators shared that many of the men on the programme had been mistreated and/or misguided early on in life and exposed to dysfunctional modelling of aroha. They felt there was a need for the men to be redirected towards an adaptive and functional definition of aroha. William and Tamati described the notion that aroha is not simply one part of the programme, but essentially it is the heart of the programme itself, indicating that all things in time come full circle back to aroha.

*“Aroha is the core, it is the programme. A lot of these guys have never experienced aroha. We had one interesting session where one guy said “I’m a bit confused about this aroha, I always understood that when I used to get the bash*

*[slang for physical punishment usually from a parent or caregiver], they were teaching me that these things were aroha, because they didn't want me to get into trouble"... and so that's how they understood aroha. There was a little bit of having to redefine aroha, because if that was their mindset then unfortunately that is how they would bring it on to their kids as well. So, we spend a lot of time redefining, we're just making sure that their mindsets have been corrected on how they perceive aroha, our ancestors perceived aroha, how aroha should be perceived today, aroha is huge, it's central to parenting and to this process."* – William

*"I think aroha is probably a big one, maybe the most prominent one [value] and it's helped by the fact that you've got a session, "Foundations of Aroha" and Matua Sam talking about it, and that Foundations of Aroha is a strong idea. I think the most important thing is the last thing he [Matua Sam] says "It's inviting aroha to be in all the moments of your days, and all the days of your life, and there is nothing that presence can't heal".* – Tamati

William and Rawiri capture the sentiment which is shared by all five of the facilitators, whereby the participants were asked to reconceptualise and recreate a new version of aroha, one which is closer to the tika (true) and pure origins of the word.

*"Aroha is about considering the others need, and I'm even thinking about my own learning doing this programme as a facilitator what I've taken away from that kaupapa about aroha, well the true essence of it. I think that's where it's [the idea of turning toward aroha] probably provoked 90 plus percent of the men that have come through the programme about their idea of love, where they've questioned it and they've gone "oh I thought I knew what love was"... through this programme it's really given them another perspective and appreciation for aroha."* - William

*"Thinking about what people define aroha as, which we add to, because you've got to ask them, "what was your version of aroha?". A lot of the time that's not really what people would call it, aye. When we describe aroha, some of our guys, say, "well I had none of that [adaptive version of aroha]", or the version I did get was pretty negative."* - Rawiri

William describes not only redefining the concept of aroha but also aroha as a process, or more simply, how to love and how to use love to benefit the whānau environment. Aroha as a learning tool introduces the process of asking the participants to reflect on their experiences, their assumptions and start to shift their thinking.

*"For someone like him [facilitator referring to participant], now in his 50s and to hear how he used to be two or three years ago, still quite stubborn, still quite set in his ways. It was black and white on how he would react to situations, how he would*

*handle his family affairs, how he would discipline his kids. He had no qualms about being physical, verbally violent with his family or partners. To really rediscover through the programme, to get on that frequency of everyone has mana, everyone should be treated with respect as a taonga, as a treasure. And if you are adopting those values, if you're open to take on new values and a new way of seeing and living life, then with that you're naturally coming from the heart, you're always coming from a place of aroha first and foremost even in the most challenging situations, and this man definitely demonstrated that....He just spoke from a real place, with his experiences of how he is now using the manual to communicate with his children on conference calls with the communication techniques [learned from the programme], taking his manual with him to the visits, just to make the most of that quality time that they had." - William*

All of the facilitator's communicated the ease of engaging the programme participants in the concept of aroha and the utility of the compass analogy as a means to facilitate both 'in the moment' reflection, and reflection on their own experiences generally.

*"Because it seems quite natural, quite easy for everything to sort of be directed back to aroha." - Jordan*

*"I always say to them, think about if your parenting out of a foundation of aroha then that determines what happens. When your children are being good or if they're not being good, if you're coming from a space of aroha then you know, the outcome is likely to be more positive than if you're not and, so I think it's a really good thing actually" - Tamati*

Three of the facilitators add that aroha is applicable not only to intimate or father-child relationships but also applies well in approaching and managing all relationships. Jordan described how he utilises aroha initially to children and then identifies the opportunity to generalise this concept across to other relationships.

*"... through the programme gradually and gently we get them to sort of work out that through love and mana you can actually radiate that to other people, not just your children, including people that you may have strong views about because they're from the other gang. Is there a reason to be that hateful towards them anymore, is there a reason to be that belligerent towards people who are actually trying to help you most of the time" – Jordan*

William and Tamati share a similar sentiment, identifying that aroha is a helpful way to reflect on past and present relationships and their dynamics, and using the concept of

turning toward aroha in-the-moment to help steer their behaviour away from habitual responding, which may have negative outcomes, to a more productive and helpful response.

*“...So when he [the participant] relates back to what he’s learning in Building Awesome Matua, about mindfulness, about more self-control, treating others with respect, he has similar stories about not being abusive [to other people] and being accepting of the situation and knowing that negative actions are going to make it worse for him ultimately. He has that train of thought now, to try and turn towards aroha. Whereas those situations for him used to be kicking a hole in the door and trying to [hurt and assault people].” - William*

*“We talk about parenting, but I also talk about how are you going to better the relationship with your partner because that’s going to impact your parenting, and being on the same page even if you’re not in the same house. – Tamati*

To summarise, *I thought I knew what love was*, does not simply apply to redefining the meaning of the word. Aroha, or love, is an intensely value laden term, particularly for those participants who understand “love” and “getting a hiding” as synonymous with one another. Reconceptualising what aroha is, is to reimagine the process of giving and receiving love, of who you give and receive love with, and how to harness love in challenging moments and in parenting. The Building Awesome Matua training manual states that aroha can be a “fundamentally transformational force” (2019, p.4), a statement which deeply aligns with the facilitators’ narrative and acts as an important introduction to the remaining themes.

### **5.2.2 Whanaungatanga - Whakawhanaungatanga, an essential and ubiquitous tikanga.**

**Building Awesome Matua Context.** Whanaungatanga, as a programme value, is defined as “Interconnected, reciprocal relationships that contribute to the whole” (Building Awesome Matua training manual, 2018, p.4). It is applied in the Building Awesome Matua programme through highlighting the “interwoven series of relationships that places fathers and their families at the centre” (p.4). Whanaungatanga, much like aroha, is woven

throughout the programme. For example, in Session Toru (3), one of the learning outcomes is; “Begin to see a new vision for yourself as a father and for life with your whānau” (Building Awesome Matua manual, 2018, p.34) and in Session Whā (4) the learning outcomes include “see the value in promoting family values rather than imposing rules” (p.56) indicating the importance of child-centred child rearing and the importance for the participants to understand their role in their whānau. These are just two examples of learning outcomes which draw on the notion of whanaungatanga to improve whānau dynamics. The results from the interviews with the facilitators identified two themes that related to whanaungatanga – (a) whakawhanaungatanga as tikanga or process and (b) the relationship between whanaungatanga, whakapapa, and identity as a man and father.

#### **Facilitators’ Perspectives.**

**“Ki te Kotahi te kākaho, ka whati; ki te kāpuia, e kore e whati.”**

“If a reed stands alone, it can be broken; if it is in a group, it cannot.” (Kingi Tūkāroto

Matutaera Pōtatau Te Wherowhero Tāwhiao, as cited in Elder, 2020, p. 119)

**Whanaungatanga as tikanga.** What was evident from the discourse on this subject was that the facilitators utilised whanaungatanga as a process to facilitate connection within the group, creating an optimal group environment, and as a resource to facilitate reflection and learning with the participants. The facilitators describe whakawhanaungatanga as an essential tikanga or protocol for someone who is facilitating Building Awesome Matua. Tikanga refers to the “correct procedure or practice, a system of values and practices that are generally deeply embedded in a social context” (Māori Dictionary, n.d.). All of the facilitators shared their belief in the essential nature of whakawhanaungatanga in forming and performing as a group and in creating group cohesion. Logren et al (2017) describes how group cohesion is an essential element in support groups and programmes, and

without it, learning and the therapeutic alliance can be obstructed. The facilitators recognised that the group context is foreign for most participants, and the ongoing process of whakawhanaungatanga gives the participants time to warm up, connect, and to become comfortable in the group setting.

*“Going through and getting to know each person from the outset creates connection in a big way. ....[there’s] benefit of having the whanaungatanga in the program. We start off with whanaungatanga in every session... it leads on through the whole programme as it’s illustrated here in the 7 chapters [pointing to the manual].”  
Rawiri*

Jordan shared how he encourages participants to engage in the process of whakawhanaungatanga because he sees value in it, even for non-Māori, as he believes it is important to know where you have come from and to share that with the group, in the spirit of fostering group cohesion and as a means of connecting.

*“Yep, so whanaungatanga is a huge part of the programme. Right at the beginning, the whanaungatanga is the mihi, the introduction, and we try and encourage them into the pepeha... We know how important it is for the dynamic. Not all of them take that up because not all of them are Māori, but we still encourage them and we say “we know you might not be Māori, but it would be nice to know exactly where you come from, and who your family is, it’s uplifting to who you are as a person, because of who you belong to” We’ve had some guys who have been really cool with their pepeha. So that’s something that we definitely encourage.” – Jordan*

The facilitators described the utility of whakawhanaungatanga in regard to building an environment for wellbeing within the group, learning, and getting participants on-board with the process, which benefits both Māori and Pākehā. The facilitators considered the participants’ growth over the course of the programme as a function of whakawhanaungatanga and how the participants find their way within the group. Anthony too described that through whakawhanaungatanga the men have participated in creating a space which is “safe”.

*“After we’ve gone through and done the pepeha work I’ve said to them “hey, you guys have made yourself vulnerable because you have just let go and we feel safe now. And*



*that's the whole safe environment, we've built with whanaungatanga. And you know, I really take my hat off to you guys" – Anthony*

Each of the five facilitators spoke of how the process of building relationships, whakawhanaungatanga, is an inherent and ubiquitous part of delivering the programme.

*"Right, whanaungatanga, I feel that it's a solid foundation of Building Awesome Matua. I guess it's from session one all the way until they graduate. With the participants, in my experience there just seems to be that natural occurrence of building rapport amongst each other and I see that as whanaungatanga. We kind of learn more about each other as we go through the content, as we go through the manual. So, I think it features quite heavily even though it may not be labelled as whanaungatanga.. – Jordan*

Tamati shared that whanaungatanga happens around a topic, both in the programme content and is borne through kōrero where participants share experiences which resonate with other participant's experiences.

*"... whanaungatanga happens about a kaupapa, they connected about their stories, they had a shared experience with each other, all different but all shared."– Tamati*

Tamati also explained that whilst whakawhanaungatanga is ubiquitous in nature it is also fundamental to being a facilitator within his wider community organisation. He, and two other facilitators, indicate that there is a cohesion between the way the Building Awesome Matua programme is "set up" and how he and the organisation he works for operate, in regards to delivering programmes and their practice.

*"Yep, I think whanaungatanga is something that we do naturally anyway with all of our programmes and the way we approach our work here, so it was an easy fit for us....I think it's set up to be in the programme." – Tamati*

The whakataukī, *If a reed stands alone, it can be broken; if it is in a group, it cannot*, emphasises the usefulness of engaging in whakawhanaungatanga for creating a sense of safety and cohesion within the group, indicating that when this process is done effectively it can build a place for people to come together and to support one another.

## **Whanaungatanga, whakapapa, and identity as a man and father.**

### ***Ko wai au? No wai au?***

*Who am I. From whom do I come?*

This second whanaungatanga theme highlights how the facilitators harnessed the process of whakawhanaungatanga to unlock the participants' connections, stories, and lives of their ancestors, and the value they believed is derived from this process.

*"After welcoming everyone, after the mihi whakatau [official welcome and introduction] where everyone goes through and introduces themselves. Typically for our Māori men that's done with pepeha. And from that [process], other Māori in the room were able to connect; "ok, I know where you're from, I know what area, we're actually from the same tribe etc, etc". And then later on in the programme, many of the men have been able to link back through their whakapapa on how their grandfathers were, how some of their older granduncles were, thinking about the male role model figures that they do have and they do hold with high regard." – Jordan*

All five of the facilitators shared their belief in the integral nature of connecting with others in the group. Moreover, the facilitators engaged in supporting and teaching the group to connect with their whakapapa by teaching the participants to recite their pepeha . Taonui (2013, p.1) states, "While whakapapa may be understood to mean genealogy, the word whakapapa carries a nuanced reference to the means by which connectedness to people, place, creation, atua and tīpuna [grandparents] is made" (Taonui, 2013, p. 1). Swann et al (2013) explains that whakapapa and its narratives (i.e., learning and reciting pepeha) generate associations and provide the basis for relational interactions with time and place, land, people, and the ancestors one descends from. Importantly, the author states "these whakapapa narratives also provide the individual and cultural context from which meaning-making, connection, and shaping of identity emerge" (Swann et al, 2013, p.13).

*"That is one of our biggest themes in our programme... It's the fact that we can [take them back]. [We discuss] the world that they're growing up in and that it is disconnected from the world that we've come from, that our ancestors have come from.... They're disconnected from the pre-colonisation [times] and sort of social training and coaching and discipline, and the raising of kids. We're finding that if we*

*can just take them back, connecting them back to their roots, we've found that has made large gains because they're beginning to understand, wow, being a Māori does count for something. ...When you bring them back to their roots, just what it was like before, what it was like now, they really embrace it; and you can feel after those sessions that there is a little bit of upstart, and they hold their heads up, you can just feel as they begin to open up a little bit better about themselves. It just helps with their self-esteem." – William*

There is a parallel between how Swann et al (2013) define whakapapa and how William defines the impact unearthing one's whakapapa has for the participants; whakapapa holds an integral importance to Māori as a meaning-making tool, a connecting force and most importantly in the shaping of identity. Importantly, the facilitators believe this process results in positive outcomes for participants. The outcome of this process is described in detail in the Aratakitanga analysis section (Aratakitanga Evaluation: Harnessing what it once meant to be a Māori man, and a father to cast a new vision; p, 148). In brief here, whanaungatanga is utilised as a tool which enables the facilitators to highlight the inherent nature of what it once meant to be a Māori man, and in many cases helps the participants identify who in their lineage lived and holds this legacy. This is the process of identifying adaptive role models for the men, past and present, and is harnessed through teaching the men to recite their whakapapa and sharing the stories of more traditional times. Learning one's whakapapa is indeed a vehicle to answer two integral questions "ko wai au?" (who am I?) and "no wai au?" (from whom do I come?). In the Discussion (Chapter 6), I will examine the utility and influence cultural connection through whakapapa may have in a Kaupapa Māori programme.

### **5.2.3 Mana Motuhake.**

**He tangata i akona ki te whare, tūnga ki te marae tau ana**

One who is trained properly will stand on the marae confidently.

The whakataukī speaks to the fact that should the participants choose to work with the facilitators and the group, they will be supported to stand confidently as a father and in the important roles in their lives. Mana motuhake is described by Building Awesome Matua as “self-determination and agency within one’s destiny. Building Awesome Matua recognises the agency of each father participating and each hosting centre to define their own successes in addition to, and perhaps independent of, the project outcomes” (Building Awesome Matua Training Manual, 2019). When asked whether they believed this was (or was not) adequately addressed in the programme, all the facilitators but one answered this question solely from the perspective of the self-determination of the participants rather than themselves or the agency they worked for. This question garnered wide-ranging responses, many of which have been subsumed into other themes in this chapter. What was quite simply answered was that all five facilitators believed that the programme came from a place of self-determination, where the facilitators felt they were helping the participants to set individualised, realistic, and achievable goals for themselves in the context of their lives and their whānau.

#### **5.2.4 *Manaakitanga***

**Building Awesome Matua Context.** Manaakitanga is defined in the Building Awesome Matua training manual as “to enhance the mana of others” by using a “strengths-based, mana-enhancing kaupapa” (p. 4). The Building Awesome Matua (2018) programme manual includes a segment titled “The Mana of the Parent” (p.41) which incorporates a kōrero defining mana, highlighting the importance of recognising your own mana as a parent and the importance of the parent in a child’s life for protecting and promoting their mana. This session focusses on tāne from traditional Māori society and incorporates notions of leadership, self-care, and different parenting styles. This session opens with the following

whakatauki which encapsulates the objectives for the session; understanding and engendering positive home values as a father and a leader of the whānau. “**He tamaiti e ako ana i te kāinga e āhei ai ki te tū tika ki mua i ngā āhuatanga katoa o te ao.** A child raised with home values will be able to stand strong against the world” (Building Awesome Matua manual, 2018, p. 37).

**Mana: A meaning making process.**

**He aroha whakatō, he aroha puta mai.**

If kindness is sown, then kindness is what you shall receive.

This whakataukī offers the suggestion that when mana is understood as it was intended, it is a trait which accompanies notions such as aroha as guiding features of the programme. The facilitators describe how mana is not about holding power over others; rather, it is about respecting the power others hold over themselves. They also share that channelling that power and the participants’ own mana is especially important when raising children. Three of the facilitators shared a similar kōrero around mana, what it inherently means and the power and influence that understanding it accurately can have. William identified the process involved in re-evaluating the meaning of some key kupu (words) throughout the programme and how this creates a base for reflection, in turn inviting the participants to cast a new vision;

*“...generally speaking most of these men aren’t familiar with the terms we speak of around whanaungatanga, aroha and mana... So we explain it and we bring it to them and say, “What does it look like for you [in your life]?” They tell us, “That’s not how we were raised.” Then we would ask them, which is the better way, what way do you think is more appropriate?” In terms of what we talk about in the programme, I mean they get it, they get it that this is how we should be raising our families, this is how our household should look”- William*

Jordan describes how the meaning of mana has been distorted for many of the men that come through the programme;

*“And the distortions are evident, whereby violence through intimidation is seen as mana, gang presidents, or fathers/males with criminal enterprises are seen as rangatira, leaders in the community, of the families.” – Jordan*

This kōrero from Jordan indicates that at least some of the men that he has worked with held contrasting views about mana, and that the context in which the word is used can be associated with important differences in its meaning. For example, according to Sachdev (1989, p.960), mana in its original form is most closely translated to mean “spiritual power, essence and prestige”. Whereas, the mana Jordan described of his participants is seen as an exertion of power over others through violent or forceful means. This operates both inside and outside the whānau environment and may also be an inherent value in the participants’ communities. The assumption for participants is that in exercising mana one must be in control, intimidating, and violent, which makes it reasonable to believe this is the stance the participants are likely to take within their whānau. Mana and masculinity are by no means synonymous, however, it is evident from the above kōrero that they are often confused. Scott et al (2014) argue that it is necessary to shift conceptualisations of masculinity which relates more directly to an exertion of power over another. The authors describe this shift moving to a place whereby fathers treat their children with love, respect, and autonomy, all elements encapsulated in respecting their mana.

The facilitators discussed with me how the development of seeing mana in a different light facilitated the process among participants of reflecting on what their beliefs are about themselves, their tamariki, and their partners. William explained that he believed if participants could shift their thinking from perceiving their mana as power over others, to harnessing the innate power *of* others through aroha and other skills taught in the programme, this will shift their thinking and behaviour towards their children. The facilitators felt that once mana is reimagined, redefined, and the participants understand

the benefits of this redefinition, it can be utilised, in a similar fashion to aroha, as a compass to guide behaviour “even in the most challenging situations” (Jordan).

In summary, the whakataukī *if kindness is sown, then kindness is what you shall receive*, highlights that the facilitators believe that in educating participants about their capacity to engage with their children and others in a mana enhancing way this enables them to engender kindness and mana towards others and in turn oneself.

### **5.2.5 Wairuatanga**

#### **Building Awesome Matua Context.**

Wairuatanga is defined in Building Awesome Matua as “the acknowledgement of the spiritual existence through and all around us” (Building Awesome Matua training manual, 2019, p.4). Wairua is “woven throughout the content and is intentional in promoting awareness and experience for all involved” (Building Awesome Matua training manual, 2019, p 4). Each session opens and closes with karakia; for Māori the use of karakia enables people to carry out their daily activities in union with their ancestors and spiritual powers and is particularly important when bringing people together. Karakia is often utilised in Kaupapa Māori interventions (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2013), and the one below offers an example of a karakia utilised in Building Awesome Matua;

He hōnore, he korōria ki te Atua  
He maungārongo ki te whenua  
He whakaaro pai ki ngā tāngata katoa  
Hangā e te Atua he ngākau hou  
Ki roto, ki tēnā, ki tēnā o mātou  
Whakatōngia to wairua tapu  
Hei awhina, hei tohutohu i a mātou  
Hei ako hoki i ngā mahi mō tēnei rā  
Amine

*Honour and glory to God  
Peace on Earth  
Goodwill to all people*

*Lord, develop a new heart*  
*Inside all of us*  
*Instil in us your sacred spirit*  
*Help us, guide us*  
*In all the things we need to learn today*  
*Amen*  
*(Building Awesome Matua manual, 2018, p. 12)*

### **Facilitator Perspectives.**

*Idiosyncrasies of Wairua.* This question produced varied responses where there was little agreement between the facilitators in their opinions of how wairuatanga was addressed. The table below (Table 5.1) encapsulates the wide variety of responses shared by the participants.

**Table 5.1:** Facilitator perspectives of wairuatanga

| <b>Wairuatanga. Formative Focus Point</b>  | <b># Participant Endorsement</b> |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Wairuatanga is well balanced, accessible and practical   | 3                                |
| Te whare tapa whā is a good tool to facilitate learning around wairua which is sometimes difficult to introduce  | 2                                |
| Wairuatanga is not presented as preachy or religious, it acts as a mechanism to highlight a very traditional te ao Māori worldview   | 3                                |
| Facilitator thinks that there isn't enough of the wairuatanga aspect included in the programme   | 2                                |
| Wairuatanga can be difficult to communicate through the legendary stories because these are unfamiliar to the facilitators and different to their spiritual modality                                   | 2                                |
| Wairuatanga is something the facilitator is really comfortable in delivering, therefore this becomes a bit part of the programme and much of the content is related back to the stories of atua (gods) | 2                                |
| The programme sits alongside the facilitator's personal religious beliefs  | 1                                |
| Facilitators would like to see more spiritual content and would like it to be more overt because of their own personal beliefs   | 2                                |



Wairuatanga is not as interwoven as other concepts and would benefit from some additional explanation and resources

2

**“He tina ki runga, he tāmōre ki raro.**

In order to flourish above, one must be firmly rooted below”

Wairuatanga, as a Building Awesome Matua value garnered a relatively polarised response. For example, the two facilitators (William and Rawiri) who shared the opinion that they would like to see more content related to wairuatanga in the programme content because of their spiritual beliefs, were also the facilitators who described the content as well balanced, accessible, and practical. Additionally, they referred to their own spiritual beliefs spontaneously and more frequently throughout the interviews, utilising metaphors and stories relating to the atua (gods) more often. In contrast to these facilitators, there was also the view that wairuatanga was less integrated/interwoven than the other values and that there should be more resources to support the kōrero. These facilitators described how they were less practiced or familiar with educating others in relation to wairua, indicating they were likely to have less personal and professional resources to draw on throughout the segments relating to wairua. All of the facilitators communicated that wairua was valuable, particularly in relation to Te Whare Tapa Whā, and providing a more holistic view of health and well-being for participants. The varied responses regarding this topic reiterate the notion that Māori are a diverse group with varying influences, and as described in the accompanying whakataukī, for the facilitators who are less familiar with wairua, to flourish, they may need support, guidance, and/or further training from Building Awesome Matua, by their own organisation, or other facilitators.

**5.2.6 Summary of Research Objective – The Goodness of Fit**

Collectively, the findings reported above suggest that the values which facilitators rely on most heavily (aroha, mana, whakawhanaungatanga), are either more integrated and/or more readily accessible to the facilitators to draw on from their own experiences. Whereas constructs or values such as wairua may be less integrated and/or more difficult to draw on for some facilitators. A resounding theme throughout the *Goodness of Fit* results is the concept of māramatanga (enlightenment; Māori Dictionary, n.d.) in relation to mātauranga Māori, whereby participants are guided through a process of creating new understandings of important cultural and familial values which promote healthy whānau.

### **5.3 Research Objective – Understanding Efficacy**

The second objective of this study was to uncover the facilitators' perspectives regarding the efficacy of the programme. This was defined as the facilitators' belief (or disbelief) that the program has the ability to produce the desired results relating to the three core goals of the programme. These goals include a reduction in family violence/harm, a reduction in anger, and an increase in whānau and community connectedness. Two questions were posed to the facilitators; "As a whole, do you think the programme helps to improve whānau relationships, and how/why?" and "As a whole, do you think the programme helps to decrease violence related risk factors and anger, and how/why?". What I uncovered was a set of themes that relate to how the facilitators approach and manage these conversations and their belief in the efficacy and impact of the programme content.

#### **5.3.1 Violence and Anger Reduction.**

**Building Awesome Matua Context.** One of the most important goals of Building Awesome Matua for whānau, is to decrease anger and other violence related risk factors. The programme introduces the subject of violence in "Whā: Session Four" (Building Awesome Matua programme manual, 2019, p. 59) and is facilitated by a 9-minute video.

The presenter discusses his lived experience of being short-tempered, aggressive, and a violent person from a young age. He shares that this way of being was a result of his early life environment and experiences, and throughout the kōrero he uses real-life examples to describe how this impacted his life and his whānau. He also describes the challenging journey he is on to undo some of the deeply embedded habitual behaviours (anger and violence) and provides insight into how these changes have benefitted him over time.

**The art of managing the challenging conversations.**

**Ko te kai a te rangatira, he kōrero.**

The ability to communicate is a chiefly attribute.

This theme focusses on the facilitators perspective of the “harder” topics included in Building Awesome Matua. There are two central ideas in this theme that co-occur; firstly, it is evident that the facilitator approaches the violence segment despite it being challenging to deliver, while utilising certain skills to encourage reflection and learning and to minimise defensiveness and shame. Tamati’s kōrero below highlights how these two concepts work in conjunction with one another;

*“I think that one of the most challenging conversations to facilitate is the discipline one. [It’s about] knowing how to manage that conversation and say “at the end of the day you can’t hit kids”. And we’re also dealing with the response from the participants which is sometimes, “oh well I was bought up that way” [being hit]. So it’s really important how you navigate that conversation to not go, “And how did that turn out for you?”. Otherwise you’ll lose them.” – Tamati*

*So ideally, we try to bring out that not all of that was positive for you as a kid. It’s always good when you have a participant who says “Yeah, I just thought my Dad was an asshole when he hit me.” But it is a challenge because in the programme work you gotta use naive enquiry and reflect back. It’s not about saying to them “You’re wrong.”, ‘Cause as soon as you get to pointing the finger people feel challenged, and that’s when they get defensive aye, which means they’re not really learning, so you gotta think hard and be patient.” - Tamati*

Jordan identified that addressing this topic means the group, to a point, must address their own violence and that this process can be uncomfortable for both the

facilitators and the participants. Despite this discomfort, Jordan also communicated that this content needed to be addressed and that he is cognizant of the experiences of the participants in this space.

*“Yep we definitely teach skills to try and reduce anger. I’m thinking of [video on violence], that would have to be in the programme. That’s always the heaviest part for the groups because quite sadly, most of the men have beaten the mothers of their children, and they have been unkind to their children. That’s probably as a facilitator, that’s where it becomes really challenging, where we want the message to be understood when we cover off that violence part of the programme, but also what’s the learning and what’s your [the participants] willingness to admit that you have those issues...I just know it’s a heavy, heavy session, always. The men are not always as willing to engage cause, probably that’s when the real skeletons are confronted.” – Jordan*

William manages this kōrero slightly differently and described that even though he does approach the topic of violence, he seems to do it less directly. He described how he frames this around emotions;

*“Yeah, so what we’ve done is actually spoken to them about how emotions work, so we’ve described emotions and tried to explain to them ok so this is what happens when you get angry. So, when they identify what their red flags are in terms of their emotional conflicts then we get them to try and manage those emotions ... and look at what happens when they get angry, what’s happening when they get offended. So they know that emotions are natural, everybody gets it, nobody doesn’t get offended or doesn’t have any emotion but it’s how they deal with it and what happens after.”*

*“I think we manage those challenging conversations because it is very much a strength-based programme. While we talk about violence, we kind of frame it as this is how emotions work.... This is how you can be, and this is how you should be. It’s all that sort of that language and that sort of talk.... Let’s own the situation and now let’s learn to take up the tools in which we’re learning to be better people, better fathers, better husbands etc.” – William*

In the programme content on violence and anger there is a metaphor utilised to teach the participants the value in being gentle and consistent in discipline, parenting and shaping their children’s behaviour. The presenter describes how as a child he used to play with old tyres and roll them down a hill. If he pushed the tyre too hard, it would simply fall over. If, however, he gave it a little nudge every now-and-then, they would slowly move in

the direction he hoped and aimed for. This metaphor of nudging a tyre to steer it, aptly captures the essence of what the facilitators described. They acknowledged that to confront the topic head on, or to shove the tyre, is likely to lead to the participant shutting down or moving into a defensive space, which is not conducive with learning or self-reflection. Much like what is described above about nudging children to shape behaviour, the facilitators recognise the need to lead the participants slowly and carefully through the topic of violence. The facilitators recognise their role as shepherds for the participants, to help identify the new path, a new vision for the men and that their role is to gently direct the men to a more adaptive destination. The whakataukī; Ko te kai a te rangatira, he kōrero, speaks to this by highlighting the notion of 'rangitira'. Rangitira is made up of two words; ranga and tira which literally means to weave people together. Therefore, to communicate utilising the chiefly communication skills, with the ability to articulate thoughts and ideas is a powerful tool in unifying or uniting different groups on an important and challenging kōrero.

**Walking the path to create the road.**

**He manako te kōura i kore ai**

Wishing for the crayfish won't bring it.

When the video presenter of the kōrero around violence describes the changes he has made in his life to reduce his anger and violent tendencies, he utilises the analogy of walking down a path. He describes walking this path time and time again until it is well worn. Here, he is describing the process in changing one's behaviour from maladaptive to adaptive. He describes that only in being conscious of one's behaviour and walking the adaptive path consistently will it begin to be habitual. The facilitators concur with this sentiment and in fact take this further by identifying that Building Awesome Matua is only

the beginning of the behaviour change process. This phrase “walking the path to create the road” stems from a video resource included in the programme. In this kōrero, the presenter describes the journey of change as a long and challenging one, a notion which is echoed by each of the facilitators in some capacity. All five of the facilitators agreed that the programme includes tools which are successful in reducing violence related risk factors. However, what is clear is that the programme is heavy in content, which means content is often unable to be fully covered in each session and that the facilitators feel the programme should be longer.

*“I think if you look at what’s in the manual it’s bigger than 7 sessions, I think you’re probably looking at 10 comfortably, allowing for some of that kōrero [referring to time spent in discussion with participants]” - Tamati*

*“I think for us it’d be a nice breakdown over 12 sessions. You could kinda get two solid sessions to cover off one of the modules.” – Jordan*

Insight is garnered concerning the ability of the programme to effect change for the participants because of their limited time together. The reflections of all five facilitators are that Building Awesome Matua is one part of the long and challenging journey for the participants. *Walking the path to create the road* captures the story of the facilitators and how impactful Building Awesome Matua can be on this journey for the men. Tamati describes the notion of ‘programme mentality’ and offers insight into how he would like to combat this for Building Awesome Matua. According to Tamati, ‘programme mentality’ is when participants believe their learning happens only within the timeframe of the group and fail to continue to engage in their learning after the programme. The consequences of programme mentality, particularly for those who may be in prison or mandated to engage in Building Awesome Matua (or other similar programmes), is not only the disengagement with the programme at its completion but also the likelihood that their attitude towards to

programme, during the programme is less conducive with the notion of continued learning.

Therefore, Tamati emphasised the importance of explicitly communicating to the facilitators that this programme is not simply 7-10 sessions, and that in fact, upon completion, the challenge to maintain positive change truly begins.

*“...At week 10 we’re talking about this, it’s really front of mind. We’ve done all this work and then the programme finishes and now you’re just maintaining it on your own if you can.... We’re trying to do as much as we can here at [facilitator organisation] to shift people to the mentality that this programme is really the start of your journey, because people have that mentality, if I get to session ten then I’m finished. But actually, we need to teach them that they’re not finished parenting and they’re not finished being in a relationship, and there’s a lot of work to do and actually to maintain that and embed the change is the biggest challenge. I suppose that was probably what they [programme creators] were trying to get at with that post programme support.” - Tamati*

He also described his aspirations for the programme to be longer so he can support the group when they are attempting to maintain the changes.

*“If you sort of said to people... the programme is actually 20 weeks and the first 7 are going to be content and the next 12 are going to be where we’re going to meet as a group and keep going yeah, that’s what I’d like to see.” – Tamati*

Anthony shared that he continued supporting group members after the programme conclusion because he saw value in making sure the participants have somewhere they can turn to after the programme if they need support.

*“A lot of my participants are wanting to connect with me in the community. They’ll grab your card and say I want to catch up with you. And I will catch up with them, I want to keep that support up.” - Anthony*

The final piece on this theme is a kōrero about what the continued support could look like from the agencies who are already engaged with the men. Tamati described that he has a part to play in terms of advocacy, and also in offering gentle reminders to the participants about their own mana motuhake when challenges with systems occur. *Walking the path to create the road* refers to how positive change evolves for the participants.

*“So I think there’s probably more we could do to utilise the mentoring resource alongside advocacy work. I mean we [facilitator organisation] tend to do that naturally because I have an understanding of the whole criminal justice, family court system... We have an open men’s support group and a couple of the guys have done both during their time. All of that I suppose is to try and encourage them while they’re dealing with that...the mentoring side of things could really help [participants] make some headway, we just need to find a way to make it work.” – Tamati*

Finally, when the question was posed to the facilitators regarding the programme’s ability to reduce violence related risk factors, each of the facilitators stated that yes they do believe it reduces the risk. Interestingly, the facilitators then tended to move on to describe the elements of the programme that address this, rather than providing direct evidence based on participant behaviour. What this indicates is that it is likely quite difficult for the facilitators to comment on or determine to what extent the programme changes the outcomes for these participants. The facilitators would have little insight outside of the participants’ own disclosure of what is occurring in the home. However, each of the facilitators did share at least one “success story”, highlighting a memorable participant where behaviour change had very clearly occurred, which the facilitators believed was a direct result of the programme.

This theme *Walking the Path to Create the Road* and the accompanying whakataukī, He manako te kōura i kore ai, highlights the importance of acting on and working hard to achieve the desired goal of reducing family/whānau violence, and only with hard work and perseverance will one be able to achieve this. What is evident from the facilitators’ kōrero is that all of the facilitators felt that Building Awesome Matua contributed in some way to reducing violence related risk factors, but this was substantially constrained by the limited time in the programme (8 weeks) compared to what was needed to adequately cover the



content. This operates alongside the unanimous belief in the need for substantial follow-up with the participants after the programme.

### **5.3.2 Whānau and Community Connectedness.**

“Tungia te ururoa kia tupu whakaritorito te tupu o te harakeke.

Set fire to the overgrown bush and the new flax shoots will spring up, get rid of what hinders progress”

Another efficacy related objective of this research was to uncover whether facilitators believed the programme is successful in improving whānau relationships. One integral theme was identified, however, it diverges from the question itself. Therefore, before this theme is described I wish to summarise the direct answer to the question “Does the programme improve whānau relationship quality” which garnered a straightforward response. Each of the facilitators believed the programme has the resources and the content to improve whānau relationships. William answered

*“Ah yes, yes [with conviction] I definitely think so... I definitely feel that it helps bridge that gap between the father and his children or child. So I definitely feel that it achieves that, I think that’s important” - William*

Tamati stated that a lot of the men come to the programme with issues relating to their anger and he clarifies his belief in the role of anger and improving relationship quality.

*“I tell them, this programme deals with anger, but it’s not about anger, it’s about family. And then they’ll respond, “oh that’s me because that’s where I’m getting angry most of the time”. I think when you talk about family and trying to grow your family and improve your family situation, you can’t go past some of the emotional aspects because we find it often takes over a family situation. You actually have to go and deal with that family situation and start cleaning your house out, so whilst it’s not an anger management programme I think it quite nicely helps to reveal to the guys “hey man” you know that stuff [anger, violence] you know, it needs to get out of your house because you can’t raise a good family if you’re still dealing with that sort of stuff.” – Tamati*

**The missing puzzle piece.** Three of the five facilitators describe an important missing piece in the programme which relates to improving whānau relationship quality. The

facilitators describe the disconnect between some of the content and the current realities of a lot of the participants. A cohort of participants are in varying positions with one commonality; they are not currently living with their children. This means that these participants have less access and in turn less potential for practicing and engaging in the newly learnt strategies included in the programme;

*“... if you look at that, I’m just looking at the brochure, [reading from the brochure] “who is Breakthrough for? Breakthrough is designed for men who have a history or risk of violence within their families” well a good number of those men are not necessarily going to be living with their families. So ideally they would be but it’s almost like you’ve got to say, ok and we’re really wanting men who are back with their families and are trying to work together aye, because some of the activities, you wouldn’t actually have an opportunity to practice them.” – Tamati*

The three facilitators believe there is an opportunity to engage in helpful education around how to parent in this context and believe participants are missing out on valuable support which is much needed. Facilitators see value in educating participants around how the parents’ relationship impacts parenting in parents who are no longer together and how to navigate the challenging relationships they may have with their ex-partner(s). Many of the participants are likely to be attempting to co-parent with someone they have been abusive towards which creates its own unique challenges for the participants.

*“In terms of the programme itself, it is about the father and the relationship with the kids, but we kind of fumble sometimes by deliberately not talking about the mother or the partners, it’s like saying to them well they don’t exist. We feel like we’re just not capturing the relationship with the partners.” – William*

*“We discuss “how does our relationship impact on our parenting” you know, because a lot of time guys will think it’s quite separate but, it’s not really. This thing around separated parenting is that there’s parenting but then there’s how do I have a relationship with my family if I’m not living in the house, and um, because that’s different than parenting um you’ll be parenting when you’ve got the children in your care but when they’re in another house, you’ve still got a relationship with them but there is someone else who is really the primary parent.” - Tamati*

Facilitators deem it important to differentiate and discuss parenting as the secondary carer (i.e., not living with the children and having limited access) knowing that this relationship dynamic looks different. Tamati believed the programme should factor in and be relevant for their main audience, those who are not with their family, rather than the “ideal” scenario of men being with their families.

The significance of this theme is linked with the research presented by Stover et al. (2003) in the introduction of this study. The research indicates that a lack of contact with fathers after an episode of IPV is linked with higher psychological maladjustment when compared to those children who have visitation rights. Therefore, the facilitators are describing a need for content which facilitates education and skill building around how the participants can best manage their visitation with their children to ensure it continues and is successful. The facilitators emphasise that they believe participants need education to minimise further conflict between participants and ex-partners for the benefit of the children involved. Further discussion regarding this can be found in the Discussion Chapter.

## **5.4 Arataki Evaluation Part One**

### ***5.4.1 Harnessing what it once meant to be a Māori man, and a father to cast a new vision.***

**Ko te maumahara kore ki ngā whakapapa o ōu mātua tīpuna, e rite ana ki te pūkaki awa  
kāore ōna hikuawa, ki te rākau rānei kāore ōna pakiaka**

To forget one’s ancestors is to be a brook without a source, a tree without its roots.

#### **Building Awesome Matua Context**

The programme manual describes traditional Māori fatherhood as, “The father was devotedly fond of his children and they were his pride and delight.... Children were

recognised as taonga, a gift from Atua, and having their own mana (dignity and worth). Everyone had their role to play in nurturing the child and drawing out their talents and skills – for the child’s sake and for the wellbeing of all.” (Building Awesome Matua manual, 2018, p. 39). The process of linking back to ancestral ties and traditional attitudes provides the opportunity to challenge current perspectives and identify cultural strengths that can still be harnessed.

This theme relates to both research questions described above (goodness of fit and efficacy), however, was arrived at via the inductive analysis. This theme intersects with elements of the whanaungatanga theme “*Ko wai au. No Wai au?*”, however the theme presented here is a broader conceptualisation and encompasses several other key ideas. The above whakataukī highlights the importance of knowing where you come from. Elder (2020) explains that remembering those who have gone before unlocks some solutions to the challenges of the present, in particular, in raising tamariki. As a Māori psychiatrist, Elder describes that part of her approach with whānau is to remind them about the power of their ancestors and the following quote captures eloquently why this is an important reminder for her clients; “How did we lose touch with the wisdom of our ancestors? Where did we learn to discount and discredit it, to marginalise it? To step over those ancient, well-worn paths of knowledge about human harmony and discord, about our planet, and all of the intricate ecosystems within our world? How did we risk becoming trees without roots?” Elder (2020, p. 132).

Similarly, the Building Awesome Matua manual draws on this notion of utilising the past to direct the present and future; *kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamaui* (I walk backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on the past). Pattern (1992), describes that traditionally, for Māori, the past, the present, and the future are viewed as intertwined and

life as a continuous cosmic process. The past is not simply left behind, one's ancestors are ever present, existing alongside and within the living. A more westernised, individualistic viewpoint conceptualises the past as a time that is behind you, and the priority is one's goals which are focussed and projected into a future state or place (Patterson, 1992). The two quoted whakataukī speak to the idea that one does not leave the past behind, but carries it into their future, bringing the strengths, knowledge, and wisdom of one's ancestors to stand alongside whānau, and in this case the participants of Building Awesome Matua on their journey. These two whakataukī act as an introduction to the theme; *harnessing what it once meant to be a Māori man, and a father to cast a new vision.*

*“Many of the men have been able to link back through their pepeha on how their grandfathers and older granduncles were, and facilitate thinking about the male role model figures that they do have and they do hold with high regard. [Māori] as people were quite traditional, the stories of older men, those [stories] have been real standouts for the men to link back and make the reference that yes, it was different than the relationship they had with their own fathers, with their own stepfathers, because that [relationship] was quite traumatic in most cases. It gets them to reevaluate their own way of being, their own lifestyle, the way they've been parenting. Because by default they've just followed the type of upbringing they've had. But they do have those role models much like [Māori kaumatua] who they liken to their grandfathers and grandmothers and uncles. They really had that old fashioned, traditional way of being, firm, fair and straightforward before everything became quite distorted for many of them.” - Jordan*

This excerpt tells the story of how remembering or identifying role models may benefit the participants. William described that some of the participants may only now be discovering traditional ways of fathering and nurturing children. This indicates that it is likely many of the participants have not been raised in a culture where these practices have been maintained or modelled and there is a disconnection between what they know of fathering and what the father's role has the potential of being.

*“I'm thinking about the traditional Māori text and the traditional Māori kōrero that's in these sessions. Because, for many of the men, depending on how disconnected they are with their own self-identity, being Māori, being Pasifika, most*

*of those stories are not heard or not known. The early observation made by Europeans of Māori, iwi, hapu, families, those stories were unheard of. When we work through those pages, I can see the men heavily concentrating. Thinking that was a reality once upon a time, imagine how lovely that era would have been, in contrast with how it is now... because of their intergenerational trauma, because of their violence and their sad upbringings or their deprived backgrounds. Yeah so, I like the balance of it..... It just takes it back to a very traditional te ao Māori worldview.”*  
– William

In the above passage William suggests that the process of unearthing the “true” role of the father, in conjunction with telling the story of why and how things changed for Māori, offers some validation for many of the men on the programme. These men, who throughout the interviews, were referred to as having their own hardships. William then moves on to eloquently describe the process of shifting that thinking and highlighting to the participants the importance of acknowledging the mana of others through aroha and describing the child as an extension of the father;

*“So the whole idea of the parent and child, they’ve been raised understanding that, or not knowing that their children have mana and a great deal of them also don’t know that they have mana. There is always the whole tension between “I am the parent, do as I say”. In the authoritative position, you are the child, you just listen to what I tell you. But when you’re talking about mana, it’s actually about how you deal with somebody’s mana, especially your child’s, so the traditional idea of treating our children and our partners as taongas, as treasures, does bring a different perspective of how they should look at their kids. And then we move that thinking towards themselves and say, ‘well, you’ve been dealt a pretty rough hand’, and a lot of these guys believe that they no longer have any mana. They believe that they’re no use or worth, and so they need for themselves to start believing that they do have mana, that they do have goodness in them, and that really their children should be a reflection of how they see themselves. So if your children are good it’s because you can see yourself as good, if your children are bad that is on you [laughs kindly].” William*

Simultaneously, the facilitators also recognised that for many Māori and Pasifika, personal self-efficacy is connected with experiences of how one’s culture is portrayed at a wider societal level. For example, the media portrayal of Māori is likely to inadvertently reinforce beliefs about Māori, particularly when it is similar to the context within which the

individual is born and raised. This is sometimes referred to as internalised racism and is defined as “acceptance by members of the stigmatised races of negative messages about their own abilities and intrinsic worth” (Jones, 2000 p.1213). Internalised racism is manifest when Māori are anti-Māori. Moreover, Rawiri shared that popular culture acts as reinforcement for the “tough guy” attitude.

*“It doesn’t help you know, these violent American movies [referring to Male Assault Female statistics] and Once Were Warriors. It’s reinforcing this stereotype, and that’s just not us. At the heart of it, it’s not us and it’s not what mana is either.... We’re all seen as the Jake [violent Māori male character] but if we look back, that’s not who we were, not before colonisation.” – Rawiri*

And finally Jordan describes how the facilitators and the programme work to re-evaluate and reframe what it *can* mean to be a Māori man and that there is more than one version of what that looks like.

*“What we’re highlighting is how beautiful our men were, the observations of how nurturing and caring tāne [men] were in traditional times. But then of course everyone knows about the time when everyone went to go and fight wars, for example, just like the haka. That is how we are perceived, all that aggression. There is evidence through these writings that the men were controlled, they knew exactly how to be fathers, how to be nurturers, as well as how to be protectors. And this is mana, this is something that we need to adopt in some ways to make sure we have that balance.” – Jordan*

An unfortunate reality in Aotearoa is the approach to teaching Māori history, where a generic and homogenous representation of Māori is presented, which tends to reinforce and perpetuate racial prejudices and stereotypes, including images of violent, uncivilised “warriors” (Manning & Harrison, 2018). Moreover, the Building Awesome Matua manual (2018) describes the common perception in New Zealand culture that Dads should be “tough, staunch figures, who don’t do the emotional stuff” (p. 40). The concept of understanding one’s past in Building Awesome Matua is an attempt to counter such stereotypes and unhelpful misconceptions. It endeavours to go further than simply

understanding one's early experiences and how that brings them to where they are in the present. Facilitators were grateful for the opportunity to teach a syllabus that allows them to speak from a te ao Māori worldview and to tell the stories of their ancestors. The facilitators believed the programme enables them to share Māori history from a less colonised view, this includes stories of how Māori men were known for being the protectors of their whānau and who upheld the sacredness of their children as taonga (treasures).

## **5.5 Research Objective - Understanding Deliverability, Logistics, and Fidelity**

The final research questions centred around deliverability, logistics, and fidelity and endeavoured to understand the facilitator perceptions regarding training and readiness to facilitate and the degree to which the programme can be delivered as it is intended (fidelity).

### **5.5.1 Facilitator Connectedness – keeping connected and building a community.**

**Mā whero, mā pango ka oti ai te mahi,**

With red and black the work will be complete.

This subject linked organically with the value embedded in the programme of “ako” and therefore is included under this section rather than in the subsection “Goodness of Fit”. Ako is defined as “to learn” by the Māori dictionary (“Māori Dictionary,” n.d.) and in the context of Building Awesome Matua as “reciprocal learning”. The application of ako by Building Awesome Matua is described as follows in the facilitator training manual (2018); “Building Awesome Matua is an opportunity for each stakeholder to learn from each other and build on their knowledge. Therefore, harnessing and honouring the multiple voices involved in this project and sharing will be a key feature of evaluation.” (p. 4). When discussing this subject with the facilitators, their responses generally were in reference to



the training and support provided by The Parenting Place, the kōrero which introduces the first theme.

This theme is built on the facilitators' response to questions relating to the level of support during and after training and whilst delivering the sessions. Some of the information has been redacted or changed (without changing the meaning) in order to maintain anonymity for the facilitators. Another factor to note is that Building Awesome Matua is delivered across Aotearoa and the deployment of the training and programme implementation has been run out in phases; therefore, some of the facilitators have much more experience delivering the programme than others. Again, for the purposes of anonymity, it's not possible to discuss the varying level of experience and/or the organisations in which the facilitators work because of the small number of facilitators delivering the programme. However, it is important to keep in mind that the facilitators come from various backgrounds, have varied experience in the sector, and have differing levels of experience in regard to delivering the programme. This means it is likely they have different sets of needs in terms of how they would like to be supported. The facilitators are also delivering the programme in different environments or contexts; for example, prisons, men's centres, Kaupapa Māori services, and The Salvation Army social services.

*Facilitator Connectedness* tells the story of how three of the five facilitators experienced a distinct feeling of disconnection between themselves and The Parenting Place and/or the programme development team. Jordan did not share this opinion, however he described the support, connection and learning opportunities he received from the people within his organisation and team, indicating connection and support is inherently present for him throughout his experience of training and learning to be a facilitator.

*“I’ve been quite fortunate to learn off [co-facilitator], and he definitely took me under his wing.... He’s definitely given me those nudges that I needed to develop professionally, as well as giving me every opportunity to debrief about the session we just had. And to have the planning sessions we go into the next week, I run ideas past him and then he gives me the time and space to introduce it into the programme because it’s relevant and with that I bring my own personal experiences of parenting, of hardship, parenting successes.” – Jordan*

William shared that he felt supported by his organisation and colleagues, however, explicitly describes the aspiration for further interaction with The Parenting Place. The inference here is that Jordan and William believe that reciprocal and continued education related to the programme is fundamental to their work and currently this is being fulfilled “in house” rather than from The Parenting Place.

Shifting back to the three facilitators who described this disconnect; the dialogue below between Rawiri and the interviewer captures that his motivations for connection and collaboration are to create a community for the benefit of himself as a practitioner, knowing that this in turn will benefit those who participate in the programme. Throughout the interview with Rawiri, he referenced his many years of experience as a programme facilitator (unrelated to Building Awesome Matua), and portrayed a real passion for leading other younger or less experienced facilitators. Below he stated that he is interested in learning from others, much like he leads others. He was also eager to benefit from being surrounded by others who deliver and have experience with the programme.

*Rawiri: “I was kind of hoping that others who were in the training, other organisations would have done something. And having that “hey how did it go delivering the first programme?”*

*Interviewer: So you wanted to catch up with the other facilitators?*

*Rawiri: “Yeah, that’s what we planned to do, you know. Let’s have coffee. But no one has picked it up. And we’ve not had any contact from The Parenting Place either which has been a bit weird. Feels a bit like we’ve just been left to run with it you know.”*

*Interviewer: "That's interesting, it shows that you're super passionate and you want the best out of the programme and you want to collaborate and learn from other people and that's a testament to you."*

*Rawiri: "You know I am passionate and I'm not bagging them. I just think we've done the training now, let's get it up and running and it would have been great to create a community in [facilitator's city] and to attend other trainings as an observer and as the participant, only to better my practice. Not saying that The Parenting Place didn't do anything, it's just they could do more after the training to facilitate that and just to check in. And for me, this has been the type of programme I have wanted to deliver, it's been a long time coming, I'd love to roll it out in high schools and I think every father should do it. We just need the conversations to be kept up you know. There's real potential to create a community around it you know"*

Similar to Rawiri, the first statement below from Tamati highlights his expectations for more communication and support based on the conversations from the training session. He then went on to share, in-line with Rawiri, his hopes that there would be a community of facilitators to connect with.

*"Yeah, you know, I think the people are good. I don't think the systems have been that good. Like I remember going to that first training and workshop and there's a whole kōrero about what was going to happen and what wasn't going to happen out at [inaudible] and none of that's really happened to be honest..."*

*....[I know that] The Parenting Place were going through a huge lot of changes as well, so that makes sense. But it probably would have been good to know a little bit more about what was going on and the other thing I think is that we started that training and it would have been quite good to be able to come back together and just have a "hey, how's it going" and talk about what are people learning and how did they do particular sessions and stuff like that. And I know they had another training oh a couple months ago in [other city] but you just don't really have any connection to the other guys...."*

*The resources are really good, and I have had some communication on other stuff that's been all good." - Tamati*

There is one small description in the training manual which describes that during the delivery of the 8-week programme there will be on-going support and accountability from the project manager (Building Awesome Matua training manual, 2019) with no further explanation granted. It is not known what conversations are had during the training about

ongoing support; however, it is evident that Rawiri and Tamati had hoped for further connection with both the training body (The Parenting Place) and the other facilitators.

William's experience can be divided into three main points which are quoted below separately but were shared as a combined statement; the first describes how William supported and is supported by those around him at his organisation. Throughout the interview William shared his belief that the values of the programme mirror and compliment the values of their organisation, most specifically and explicitly whanaungatanga "the foundational principle which invigorates all key concepts and learning outcomes" (Building Awesome Matua Training Manual, n.d.).

*"I feel I have the option to do that [receive support and learn from others], but more because we feed back a lot in amongst ourselves here [at facilitator organisation]. I've got the luxury of having co-facilitators with me. We have our own feedback discussions here because we're all here to awhi the programme.*

To "awhi" is to embrace or surround, and the sentiment William portrays is that their organisation is one where reciprocal learning is part of their culture and their practice is an inherent part of how they deliver programmes. The second part of the statement adds further evidence of William's proactive nature and describes how he is a keen practitioner who seeks feedback and ongoing learning opportunities from the lead trainer of the programme.

*"With regards to The Parenting Place, it's very casual, so I often speak with [lead trainer], and I often share some of the things about the modules; you know, if I have any questions or how a module has gone with a group session and that sort of thing. So I would do that with him and he's quite, you know, he's cool about being able to share, maybe different ways to approach that module etc." - William*

The final statement offers some information on how to bridge the gap between the third parties who deliver the programme and The Parenting Place.

*"But I do feel maybe I'd like a better relationship between myself and The Parenting Place like more on a formal basis where I go and visit them or chat on the*

*phone and just explain how things are going. I thought it would be helpful for both of us.” - William*

Anthony’s response to the questions relating to reciprocal learning and support garnered a different response, where he emphasised the importance of learning from the Building Awesome Matua group participants, rather than from other facilitators or the training body.

*“I think it has really reemphasised a lot that learning for me comes from them [the participants] and the conversations. It kind of cements it for me aye. For example, we know we’re not supposed to be all “toughen up or man up”, it’s about being honourable. Like I’ve heard this a lot, but when you hear it from the guys [group participants] it really confirms it for me.” - Anthony*

Anthony, as a facilitator, comes with many years as working as a stand-alone facilitator across a range of programmes. So, while his narrative did not follow along the same lines as the four other facilitators, it indicates that there too are facilitators who are comfortable facilitating programmes independently and with little ongoing support. The question regarding this approach to facilitation is whether being an isolated and/or unsupported facilitator is best practice and whether it helps or hinders the quality of facilitation and the participant outcomes. The authors of Caring Dads describe this notion as “quality control”, which relates to the drift in facilitator practice when they are insufficiently trained and/or insufficiently supervised (Scott et al., 2018, p. 10). The discussion section focusses on the implications of this including the insights and learnings shared by the Caring Dad’s programme. What the whakataukī, Mā whero, mā pango ka oti ai te mahi, portrays is the importance of collaboration, particularly between those who are leaders and the people who are learning.

### **5.5.2 What’s in the Kete?**

**Nāku te rourou nāu te rourou ka ora ai te iwi**

*With your basket and my basket, the people will thrive.*

This whakataukī encapsulates the relationship between the facilitator and their resources. Albeit rather practical in nature, at a basic or fundamental level, when a tool or resource resonates with a facilitator, their relationship with the programme strengthens. “Kete” refers to “kit” or “basket” in te reo Māori and this theme endeavours to depict and summarise the relationship between facilitator skill and experience, and the resources the facilitators have been provided in the Building Awesome Matua kete (course manual, video resources, and training materials). Whilst a range of resources were commented on throughout the interviews, the focus is again narrowed to the most consistent themes represented across the facilitators’ narratives.

**Video Resources.** The programme contains 18 videos over the eight sessions and feature a well-known Māori actor, comedian, and television host. Of these, 10 are the building blocks of the curriculum in that they set the tone for the session, describe key concepts, and offer light-hearted sketches as examples and an explanation for each session. The remaining 7 videos contain appearances from several different men who share their insights on parenting, they describe their challenges as men growing up in Aotearoa, their challenges as fathers, the successes they have experienced and finally, they discuss the key concepts in the programme. Four of the five facilitators described the videos as an excellent way to introduce the sessions and to facilitate the kōrero around the sessions kaupapa. William captures the sentiment of the facilitators below;

*“I think there has been real value in all the videos. I think it’s really cool that we can actually process this whole programme in between the videos. You can get a bit stagnant with the discussions, so you move on to a video; and there you find a different teaching, then that starts up a different conversation. So, I think the videos captures their attention, you find a lot more energy straight after the videos so they’re contributing a lot.... Before we move on [we ask the men] what’s your take? They share*

*and the discussion routine starts up again. But definitely videos are great to start a conversation and if things sort of get quiet.” – William*

There were two videos which three of the five facilitators mentioned specifically. These featured a kōrero considering violence and a kōrero introducing role models and being raised by a larger whānau than just the nuclear family. These videos were considered valuable for several reasons; the most salient aspect that registered with the facilitators regarding these video resources was the response from the participants. These responses appeared in three key ways; relatability to the presenter, impact of the kōrero on the group, and how it facilitated reflection or learning for the participants.

Jordan describes the reaction from the participants in regard to a personal story that was shared about the change in one father’s life and his desire to give back to his community. Jordan reflects how the presenter’s casual and easy-going delivery helped the men identify with him and believe that being like him (a positive role model in his community) is a possibility.

*“There’s been quite a lot of comments from the men, in particular [name of presenter’s] kōrero. The men say, “oh man, he reminds me of us”. Just how he’s visually perceived, because he’s quite casual; and he’s got an easy-going nature about him, and so the men really enjoy his videos. Not only for the content but also for how he appeared and how comfortable they felt with listening to what he had to say...Some of the men [were] quite impressed, even saying comments like they weren’t expecting how he spoke. Or you know, ‘man he sounds pretty intelligent.” These were the things they were feeding back about [name of presenter’s] videos. [They found it] interesting to learn about his story too. – Jordan*

William and Jordan describe how the videos encourage self-reflection for the participants, asking participants to consider, “What kind of parent am I?”, “How has my behaviour impacted my whānau?”, “What kind of person do I want to be?”. The facilitators indicate that the videos act as a vehicle to promote this kind of self-reflection, a key skill taught in counselling settings in order to affect client behaviour change (Logren, 2017).

Jordan describes how one specific video is noticeably challenging for the participants, whilst also simultaneously resonating with them. This kōrero is likely challenging because it is highlighting the participants' own experience of being violent or using intimidation with their partners or children. Moreover, it is likely this video, which highlights the agency one has over their decisions in their life, is a reminder of some of the maladaptive behaviours participants have engaged in, and the detrimental decisions the participants have made in their life. It is evident that the process of change for the participants of Building Awesome Matua is expected to be a challenging and complex process, particularly for the men in correctional settings. Jordan explains how the intensity of the kōrero is allayed by the important and practical *how* of deciding to be violence free, utilising the resources and “fleshing out” those skills around scaffolding and avoidance of alcohol.

*“I’m thinking of [presenter’s name] and that’s always the heaviest part of the BAM programme for the groups .... but also [I ask the participants] “what’s the learning and what’s your willingness to admit that you have those issues of struggling with anger and violence and then what do you need to do, what can we do to prevent this from being a part of your character”.....[Presenter’s name] gives some practical examples of what he’s done with his scaffolding, and we have a brainstorming session after that about what did they get from the video; but also to incorporate and flesh out what scaffolding is. Scaffolding is social supports, it’s meant to be something that is in place just as a temporary measure just to assist you... [Presenter’s name] is talking about [how] he didn’t even touch alcohol because he realised that wasn’t going to help him with him wanting to be the person that he knew he could be, being violence free. I just know it’s a heavy, heavy session, always. The men are not always as willing to engage cause, probably that’s when the real skeletons are confronted.” – Jordan*

Finally, another video resource which was consistently referred to throughout four of the five facilitator interviews was the introductory video by a Māori Kaumātua. It is evident that the facilitators believe this video adds considerable value for the participants and provides the significant support and content for the facilitators. Jordan describes the kōrero in the video and shares that it is the most requested video from the participants. He



believes this is because it's compelling and thought provoking. Finally, Tamati also highlights a pivotal point, stating that "every group is different, some people really clue into different things, so it does vary", and so on any given day the pragmatism of the facilitators is tested in order to deliver the best programme for the group. The narrative of the facilitators indicated that the ultimate combination of a particular resource is utility, goodness of fit, and something that sparks self-reflection and discussion within the group.

As is clear, the above responses from the facilitators is dominated by the video resources indicating their key contribution to the kete or basket. Whilst the facilitators shared their satisfaction with many of the resources, the conversation was resoundingly centred on the video resources. The facilitators were also asked several questions related to deliverability and logistics which garnered relatively short responses. For example, when I asked whether the facilitators had any safety concerns, all five facilitators simply responded no. Additionally, when I asked the facilitators whether there were any elements of the programme where the participants got bored or distracted, the facilitators described that it was dependent on the group and the individuals, and that nothing in particular stood out to them.

**Fidelity.** Fidelity refers to "the degree to which programs are implemented as was intended by the program developers" (Dunsenbury, 2003. p. 238). As described in the introduction, the reason fidelity is of interest is because it is a potential moderator of the relationship between interventions and their intended outcomes (Carroll et al, 2007). Whilst fidelity was of interest in the current study, it was not measured in the data collection stage directly. However, it became evident during coding phase that there were topics the facilitators believed were not covered, or not effectively covered by the programme and in some cases the facilitators made it clear they had deviated from the programme content.

All five facilitators gave an indication that they shifted, added or changed elements of the programme. It is clear the facilitators believe these accommodations were for the greater good of the participants; however, it is also evident that the facilitators utilise different approaches to prioritising what they believe are the participants' needs. For example, Anthony shares that he emphasises and prioritises relationships over and above meeting the learning objectives and covering off the content of the course.

*"So the key to all my programmes that I run is that it isn't all about the programme, it's about the relationship I have with you [the participant]. So I would spend an hour on the programme and then I would spend an hour and a half after the programme just talking with them, making myself available, answering any questions, and that's the key to it I think, well I know. It's not the programme itself, and I guess it's an easy place to speak into people to address their needs on the day. You know because they're often looking for that, not just to learn content but to be heard, to be acknowledged." – Anthony*

Whereas, as referred to in the theme "The missing puzzle piece", Tamati shares how he believes he is empowering the participants' agency by being flexible with the curriculum – allowing salient issues to be added in order to address participants' needs and taking more time to make sure learning takes place.

*"Monday, we didn't even do a session [laughing, exasperated]. Our whole kōrero was on separated parenting. It's just what came up in one of the guys check-ins and we had to run with it because it became clear it was something that was on the other guys' minds too. That's alright though, we'll just do the session next week. And we also did one session over two [weeks] this time, because there is quite a lot of content in it and I'd rather that we had a good discussion; and we just said, hey let's just catch up and finish this off next session." – Tamati*

These insights are complemented by the below excerpts which give further examples of how and sometimes why the facilitators may feel the need to modify or alter the programme content. In some cases there is a simple change of pace, a waiting for the participants to warm to the group processes and warm to particular ideas, which may be new or confronting for the participants. This indicates that facilitators feel an air of

stewardship over the process, and describe how any movement away from the programme content or structure is done with motivations and the belief that it is benefitting the participants;

*“We sometimes repackaging or rephrase some of the sessions. For example, it’s not that I’m explicitly labelling it wairua or spirituality I might just refer to it as a feeling. And then I will sort of just make reference to that, that’s the wairua that we were talking about, it’s a feeling, it’s a sensation, it provokes thought. I package it like that to make sure we’re not losing some people by talking about God or spirituality completely upfront.” – Jordan*

The facilitators communicate that they believe they are cognizant of the diverse and complex contexts of the participants. They believe that they have the capacity to gauge the group and that based on this assessment they can alter the pace, tone and sometimes the content of the programme to better suit the participants. William and Rawiri describe their justifications for taking this approach. For William, the focus is to make sure the information is understood on a practical level; whereas for Rawiri, he sees value in taking everybody on the journey of understanding their lineage despite their cultural background; therefore, he alters the content according to what he believes suits the people in the room.

*“My thing is, you’re only as good as the weakest point in the group; so I know some guys get it, but we don’t actually move on until the whole group gets it. The men will tell you themselves that they finally get it.” – William*

*“We take our time, to help and assist the guys. One of the major highlights was with our European guys that came in. Our [European] brothers, who basically for the first couple of sessions were like, “What the hell?” You know, we’re up saying where we’re from [referring to the mihi process and pepeha]. I structured it a bit differently to the manual, to you know suit this particular group better...So they made their own pepeha... I’m going to do it this way again, it was really, really cool to see how they responded after feeling so uncertain about it, and how it helped them engage in the importance of knowing who you are and where you’re from.” – Rawiri*

Whilst the intentions of the facilitators are understandable based on their justifications and insights into delivering the programme and the needs of the participants, there is still a

tension and fine line between maintaining the therapeutic alliance, creating the best environment for learning, and fidelity to the programme manual. In the context of Building Awesome Matua, the programme content is steered by the evidence-based rationale embedded in the theory of change, therefore, to follow the manual is to maintain a more evidence based practice. It is not known whether there is explicit mention in the training regarding the importance of fidelity, and it is unclear whether the facilitators are aware of its importance in manualised programmes. Chapter 5, Discussion will examine these issues in greater detail.

## **5.6 Arataki Evaluation Part Two**

**Ma mua ka kite a muri, ma muri ka ora a mua.**

Those who lead, give sight to those who follow, those who follow give life to those who lead”

Here I detail the final section of the results. Similarly to Arataki Evaluation Part One, Arataki Evaluation Part Two was guided by the facilitators’ kōrero rather than by my research questions. These two themes are placed under the deliverability, logistics, and fidelity section because in asking these questions the facilitators shared key skills they drew on to deliver successful and safe groups.

### ***5.6.1 Self-disclosure, positive role-modelling, and learning side-by-side.***

The above whakataukī aptly captures the facilitators conscious motivations to share their experiences of being a father. Their belief is that in disclosing this information, they are modelling behaviour and strengthening relationships. Four of the five facilitators communicated that they find value in “self-disclosure” or being open, honest, and transparent with the group about their own challenges, successes, experiences, and learnings. In conjunction with this, the facilitators described using their repertoire of skills

and personal experiences to model and explain concepts. They believed engaging in the programme content themselves fosters better relationships with the participants, but it also creates an opportunity for personal and professional development through the programmes' teachings, meaning they often feel as though they are learning side-by-side with their participants. A discussion regarding practitioner self-disclosure and modelling will be presented in the discussion section.

Jordan explains how he utilises modelling as a means of connecting with the group. This is evidenced in the passage below where he explained that he believes the process of sharing breaks down some barriers between himself and the participants, with the ultimate goal of creating a safe and supportive group environment.

*"I try and bring my own personal experiences of parenting, of hardship, and parenting successes. Both before I did the programme and what I've taken on board as I've gone through the programme. Speaking from my first-hand experiences of the benefits that the programme does have. And you know the men sit there and go "ok, wow, even though this guy here, he's the facilitator, he's being quite honest and transparent that he's not the expert on parenting, he's bringing these real examples from his own whare, and he is even giving this stuff a go". They listen to the changes in my whānau dynamics. It shows it's doable, it's feasible, man it just sounds simple."*  
- Jordan

William shared a similar sentiment, in which he likened his role with that of a grandfather or a parent, which is very much in line with the concept of being a tuākana, a leader, a mentor, or a role-model. He also shared that he had gained some valuable insights personally from the programme and that he is motivated to share these insights with the group.

*"Yeah, so I have enjoyed working with the guys [participants] I take on that old grandfather sort of role. A lot of these guys, well, all of these guys are younger than me [laughing]; so, you kind of feel like you're parenting again. I kind of feel I have a responsibility. I'm no perfect angel, but I was able to transform and change and I just want to be able to help these guys and share some of the learnings I've gained from the programme too." – William*

Rawiri described, somewhat less explicitly, that self-disclosure, relating to the content, “being real” and bringing your own experiences and expertise to the facilitation process benefits the group and is a part of how he practices as a facilitator.

*“We did some of our own stuff you know... But it was more around how am I going to relate to this mahi [work] and how can I make sure that everyone is on board. Sometimes you just need to switch it up and definitely bring yourself and your experiences into the mix, and I do that. I tell them about what I’ve learnt from the programme myself and little changes I’ve made with my kids you know. I also tell them when I screw up or when it’s hard. I just try and be real with the guys and that means sharing that I find parenting challenging too.” - Rawiri*

Jordan felt the reason he engaged with facilitating the programme this way is because the content and style of the programme allows itself to flex with the facilitators style, background, and experiences which in turn allowed the facilitators to feel really comfortable delivering it.

*“Definitely, there’s so many restrictions with other programmes that I’ve delivered. Where you are encouraged to stick to the manual as it’s written and it doesn’t come across as being very personable because it’s quite psychoeducational. I really, really enjoy and I’m very comfortable with BAM, because I’m allowed to be myself, to be my true self as a facilitator, and to be relaxed enough to really go through the programme confidently, as opposed to other programmes where I feel like I’m still learning the ropes”. - Jordan*

### **5.6.2 Mahi tahi: Building the therapeutic alliance, mutual aid and collaboration with facilitation skills.**

**Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini.**

My success is not mine alone, it is the success of the collective. No one gets there alone.

The facilitators described that there is value in being the conductor of the kōrero instead of the "expert", recognising that everyone comes with their own expertise and that shared expertise serves to benefit and engender positive group alliance;

*"....we're only the conductors in this situation. Our goal is to get these guys to share their stories and to align those stories to what we're trying to teach them .... so the more they talk the better it is for us. There's always different dynamics between the groups but what we've found, the first session when everybody is real mellow, nervous, and unsure about each other, so there's a bit of a process involved in terms of trust and being confident to speak out and that normally is achieved probably by the third session and then after that man it just becomes natural you know, and it becomes easy to conduct the session... We try and get as much out of them as possible and just work and facilitate that process in terms of what the modules about and where they're at and getting them to understand and articulate their understanding of what we're trying to bring to them" - Jordan*

Facilitators argued that their objective was to uphold the voices of their participants and that the real value from the group came from the *kōrero* of the participants, rather than simply the teachings of the facilitator. This concept is sometimes referred to as “mutual aid,” which refers to the concept of voluntary reciprocal peer support to address a shared problem (Hutchison et al, 2018). The facilitators enabled this process by conducting the *kōrero* and acknowledge that each participant’s story and contributions in the discussion contribute to the whole groups’ learning as well as their own learning as facilitators. Jordan gives an example of what mutual aid might look like in a group setting and identified the importance of this process.

*Jordan-Interviewer dialogue:*

*“...I want to quote another participant because I liked his reflection, he said “well, you know” and he looks at this peers and he says “brothers, you know, everyone here, whether you believe it or not were not actually bad fathers, it’s just that at the moment, we don’t quite have the tools that we need to be the fathers that we want to be. And for some of us old ones, ah it’s a case of us sharpening up our tools. So that’s what I’m getting from this programme”. And you know, it really, really registered with the men. I think that’s a good example of how letting the men speak their learnings has value, huge value.” – Jordan*

*Interviewer: “That’s very profound for the participant to say, it sounds like they do a lot of learning from each other?”*

*P1: “Oh for sure. If anything, aside from Building Awesome Matua [content], I’m there to facilitate the *kōrero* and if it takes care of itself that’s what it’s about, the ratio should be more them having discussions amongst themselves instead of me*

*and [co-facilitator] being up there going blah, blah, blah for the whole two hours.” - Jordan*

The facilitators communicate that they endeavour to understand and prioritise the participants’ needs and respond to these accordingly. They described how their practice comes from a place which is participant led, in the sense that hearing, acknowledging, validating, and unpacking the client’s experience is prioritised over adhering to the session plan or schedule. Facilitators prioritise process, as described in the introduction, such as participants’ reflections and facilitators modify where they feel is appropriate or necessary.

Each of the facilitators indicate that they feel comfortable working with and facilitating programmes with this cohort and described how they draw on their experience and professional judgement to establish and maintain a good environment for learning and connecting. Tamati shared that through patience, respect and non-judgement he felt he could harness the innate goodness within the men, utilising their skills and expertise on their own lives to their benefit.

*“Well a lot of the time it’s about showing respect, you know to the men as well. That you’re not going to judge them, and that we’re all learning about being parents, and being good men and it’s all part of the journey and we’re all in it together. And also that they come with their own expertise. They don’t come just as a blank page, and just because they haven’t got some things right doesn’t mean that you know, they can’t move forward positively” - Tamati.”*

Finally, the sense is that the facilitators draw on key facilitation skills, including patience, alliance building, and evening out power structures. They explicitly stated that this is for the greater good of group cohesion and participant engagement. This whakataukī emphasises how the facilitators strive to bring out the strengths of the participants by treating them with respect and non-judgement and in doing this they are able to form an effective collaboration with (some) participants which facilitates overall group wellbeing.

## **5.7 Summary of the Results**



The above results highlight the rich and diverse experiences of both the facilitators and the programme participants. In reviewing the results overall, several key ideas are emphasised. Firstly, it is clear that the facilitators find it valuable to understand and acknowledge where participants may hold less adaptive definitions of key Māori terms (i.e., aroha and mana) and that there is value in offering the participants a different narrative regarding these. Moreover, facilitators demonstrated a sense of understanding for the Māori participants regarding their upbringings and their experiences which led them to use violence. This sense of understanding is evidenced in the inherent and active non-judgement exhibited by the facilitators towards the participants. Secondly, the results section dedicated to aroha, whanaungatanga and manaakitanga indicate that these concepts are widely and consistently drawn on as key areas the facilitators endorse and find helpful and that they are potentially more familiar with facilitating. Whereas, the values of ako, wairuatanga and mana-motuhake seem less well represented and/or familiar in the narrative of the facilitators. Another idea of note that emerged was the similarity and use of key facilitation skills the facilitators drew on, alongside their opinions regarding the usefulness of the resources that support their work. Each of these topics and several others relating to the present studies research objective will be covered in the subsequent discussion chapter.

## **6 Chapter Six: Discussion**

Presented in the results section are a series of themes that on the whole highlight the experience of five facilitators as they shared their perspective of what it means to facilitate Building Awesome Matua. The fundamental goals of this study were to contribute one important dimension to the overall Building Awesome Matua research plan. Due to the early developmental stage of the programme, and as researchers on programme development advocate (e.g., Fraser et al, 2009; Rossi et al, 1999), the focus for the present study was to assess the facilitators' perspective on the programme's cultural goodness of fit, the efficacy of achieving key outcomes as identified in the theory of change, and the programme's deliverability (training and support, group process, and fidelity), materials, and resources (Fraser et al., 2009). To examine the programme's cultural goodness of fit, interview questions specifically addressed how programme facilitators felt the overall curriculum was effectively built on kaupapa Māori values, including; whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, wairuatanga, ako, aroha, and mana motuhake.

### **6.1 Current Findings in Context**

This section endeavours to apply the knowledge garnered from the facilitators, and the themes uncovered in the results to the violence desistance literature. Ultimately, the goal is to understand what aspects of Building Awesome Matua may facilitate meaningful change and compare this to what is known about change and desisting from violence more generally. Moreover, the ToC was utilised in formulating the research questions and areas for investigation and therefore in attending to these subjects it is possible to understand how the results support or contradict the Building Awesome Matua ToC. The full ToC

document is available in Appendix B, and the previous summary can be found in Chapter Three (p. 84).

### **6.1.1 Catalysts for Change**

#### **Māramatanga (enlightenment and understanding).**

The facilitators portray that one of the integral components of the programme is addressing the divergence of meaning relating to several central Māori values and kupu; aroha, mana, father, and tāne. The results highlight the importance of these kupu as programme content and the implication that one's understanding of concepts, both simple and complex, are shaped by our environment, by one's whānau, and by one's experience of their meaning. These meanings shape beliefs and the formation of one's identity, aligning with the concepts described in social learning theory. Although the research is mixed regarding the intergenerational transmission of violence, Cameranesi and Piotrowski's (2020) work indicated the importance of early socialisation in learning and the internalisation of certain beliefs regarding behaviour. This too is an underlying assumption and rationale included in the ToC, which details that often, many of the men in the programme have not grown up in a whānau or environment that models positive whānau values such as whānaungatanga, aroha and mana. The facilitators and the whānau violence literature describe how these lost and confused concepts (e.g., mana) can be attributed to the impact of colonisation, and that the process of reconsidering their meanings is vital. Kruger et al (2004 p.3) state that colonisation resulted in the "destruction and distortion of whakapapa, tikanga, wairua, tapu, mauri and mana" which is in part responsible for the normalisation of whānau violence.

The theme ***"Aroha – I thought I knew what love was"*** highlights the likely internalisation of maladaptive beliefs and behaviours by participants and the incorporated

process embedded into the programme which provides education regarding the traditional or pono version of aroha. This process is centred around the reflections and sharing of stories as described by the facilitators. Each facilitator described that many of the men on the programme had been mistreated and/or misguided early on in life and exposed to dysfunctional modelling of aroha. Kruger et al (2004) describe how “transformation and empowerment refers to dispelling and deconstructing the ways in which Māori cultural constructs are used to validate violence, challenging the mythology that whānau violence is normal and teaching alternatives to violence” (p.31). The opportunity to reframe this definition of aroha from one contextualised by violence (violence is how you show love to protect from future harm), to one that is contextualised by taonga and mana (Māori Kaumatua, Building Awesome Matua video resource, 2018) is considered by the facilitators as one of the most fundamental elements of the programme.

The process of reconceptualising a value-laden term such as aroha should not be trivialised. Beck (2011) describes that “beginning in childhood, people develop certain ideas about themselves, other people, and their world” (p. 31) which results in an individual’s belief system. If we apply a psychological model relating to belief systems such as a cognitive-behavioural model (Beck, 2005) we begin to understand the complexity of shifting core beliefs. Core beliefs are defined as “enduring understandings so fundamental and deep that they are often not articulated, even to oneself” (Beck, 2011, p. 32). What the programme facilitators are engaging in, whether purposefully or not, is the identification and deconstruction of enduring and internalised beliefs about aroha, violence, fatherhood, and other key concepts, and then offering a more adaptive version. Kruger et al (2004) describe this process as education for empowerment and the decolonisation of terms which should be utilised to promote whānau wellbeing rather than obstruct it. The cognitive-

behavioural model posits that core beliefs, although often hidden from view, are manifested in our thoughts, emotions, and importantly behaviour. For example, if one believes, because of experience, that violence can be an expression of aroha or mana, this may restrict adaptive, or promote maladaptive responses to their children in challenging situations such as discipline. Building Awesome Matua places aroha as a “fundamentally transformational force” (Building Awesome Matua training manual, 2019, p.4), a statement which deeply aligns with the facilitators’ narratives. Mead (2003) describes tikanga as a term that encompasses “customs, ethics, values, culture and principles for daily life” (p. 42), so whilst the programme places aroha at the centre, highlighting its importance as a part of the participants learning ‘new ways of being’ (K. Walker et al, 2015), it too is utilised as a process tool by facilitators, a reminder, and a compass to direct the participants back to what is tika (true, correct).

Another example of how reconceptualising key terms is transformative, relates to the reconceptualization of mana and the theme “*Mana: A meaning making process and a new vision*”. The facilitators who endorsed the concept of re-evaluating and redefining the notion of mana are explicit in their opinion about the participants’ ‘distorted’ view of the term. Therefore, a paradox exists here too, where mana is believed by fathers at the beginning of the programme to involve control, intimidation, and violence. In stark contrast, traditional conceptualisations reject such notions, and translate mana as actions which garner respect and are inherently respectful, these actions treat another’s essence and their own as holding important value. In applying Walker’s Model of Desistance, described in Chapter Three, it is hypothesised that these ‘original’ conceptualisations exist in the participant’s *Old ways of being*. For example, mana, much like aroha, may have become synonymous or associated with violence for a proportion of Māori. Therefore, this belief

validates and gives *permission* for individuals to use violence. The current research proposes that the paradox and process of enlightenment (māramatanga) for Building Awesome Matua participants are consistent with Walker's (2015) model in that the *old ways of being* encompasses maladaptive beliefs about important concepts which validate the use of violence. The process of māramatanga, forming a new understanding through education, operates as a function (or *catalyst*) that supports change and is consistent with maintaining the *permission to be non-violent*. Moreover, this too is consistent with Te Puni Kōkiri's (2010, p. 122) conceptualisation of how to combat whānau violence, in which the authors highlight the importance of "dispelling the illusion that violence is normal and acceptable". The reconceptualization of mana and aroha can also be considered in the context of the transtheoretical mode of change (TTM; Prochaska & DiClemente, 1982; Prochaska, DiClemente, & Norcross, 1992) and are likely creating the foundation for the participant to move from the early stages of change (*precontemplation* and *contemplation*) to the more *active* states where adaptive beliefs, values and norms are considered, which as the facilitators describe builds further evidence and motivation for change for the participants.

### **Self-efficacy and Attaining a Secure Identity**

Additionally, the meaning making of mana intersects with the theme; *Harnessing what it once meant to be a Māori man, and a father to cast a new vision*, as it is evident that through the process of uncovering what it once meant to be a Māori man, and comparing that to what is 'expected' now, participants are educated on the lifestyle and behavioural choices which align with *non-violent, new ways of being*, while also considering the factors which influence participants' life-course experiences which led them to violence. The results indicate that this serves a dual purpose, one of validation, and the other of education and redirection. In Building Awesome Matua, it is argued that this process of "*harnessing what it*

*means to be a Māori man*” is created through the process of whanaungatanga and whakapapa. Each of the facilitators describe the efficacy of this process, and the positive response from the Māori participants in relation to the ‘old’ internalised meaning applied to what it means to be a tāne Māori.

Swann et al (2013) propose that counselling practices by Māori with Māori are essentially shaped around whakapapa, because whilst whakapapa is translated to mean “genealogy” (Māori Dictionary, n.d.), Taonui (2013) considers whakapapa as a “means by which connectedness to people, place, creation, atua and tīpuna is made” (p.1) and that this process is vital in increasing self-efficacy and agency. Therefore, by unearthing participants’ whakapapa, the facilitators are providing meaning, context, and understanding as the layers of one’s experiences unfold to discover the layers of one’s ancestors’ experiences, their lineage, and their legacy. In Building Awesome Matua, this process is likely an important part of the reformation of participants’ identity, from violent to non-violent, and the programme provides the function of both education (being provided information and alternate views) and reflection via the application of the information and the opportunity to discuss this in the context of the participants’ own experiences. Importantly, K. Walker et al (2017, p. 372) highlight that one of the most widely identified triggers (*catalysts*) for change is the “subjective change in identity” (p. 372). Through re-telling, educating and enabling the participants to reconnect with the diverse stories of their ancestors, in visualising their whakapapa, the programme is creating the awareness and disentangling those deeply entrenched core beliefs about what it means to hold mana, and what it means to be a tāne Māori.

Additionally, Walker et al (2017a) describe two levels of desistance; primary and secondary and emphasises the important distinction between them. Primary desistance

acknowledges the initial stage of desistance, whereby the individual has been violence free for a 1 year period. Whereas secondary desistance is the long-term modification of behaviour, beliefs and attitudes which involves the disruption in existing roles and a discernible and quantifiable change in personal identity is established. This shift in personal identity is considered an internal factor which predicts long-term desistance from violence. This is because once this shift occurs, cognitions and beliefs are no longer congruent with violent behaviour and if violent behaviour is engaged with the negative emotional responses are much stronger, discouraging further violence.

An important factor built into the process is building self-efficacy which supports the process of shifting one's identity and behaviour. As mentioned, the facilitators share that many of their participants have experienced trauma, whānau violence and other negative experiences. Moreover, as the Building Awesome Matua ToC states, many of the men have not had a positive role model, father figure, or kaumatua to learn from. Morran's (2013) research suggests that their participants who had experienced violence and then subsequently used whānau violence themselves, believe their experience of violence led to self-loathing, and low self-worth which impacted their view of themselves as men. This knowledge, in conjunction with the facilitators' responses, indicates that the participants likely experience shame, intense negative emotions (i.e., jealousy, anger, guilt) and the belief that to attain mana, one can use violence, power and control. It is probable these experiences, to some extent, are related to low self-efficacy. The facilitators reiterate how powerful the education regarding whakapapa is for the Māori participants and their self-efficacy because it shows that the positive stories of their tīpuna live on within them. The results indicate that the knowledge that "being Māori really does count for something" (Jordan, programme facilitator) is mana enhancing for the participants. Maruna and Roy



(2007, p. 119) share that this is the provision of “new scripts” for future identity development. The desistance literature also highlights that identity reformation is one fundamental part of the accumulation of numerous catalysts for change (Walker et al, 2017). Interestingly, interventions often cite that these changes are a result of being held accountable for their actions, and that through cognitive-behavioural approaches their underlying core beliefs shift from maladaptive to adaptive. Whereas, Durie (2004, p. 183) states that cultural identity is fundamental to wellbeing and that “security of identity requires entry into the Indigenous world – tribal estates, language and culture, family, Indigenous networks, and a unique heritage.” A core concern of Durie is that often, in colonised societies, Indigenous peoples frequently have limited access to their own worlds, therefore programmes such as Building Awesome Matua may bridge that gap and begin the process of reconnection which Te Puni Kōkiri (2010) share is vital and transformative. The ToC rationale focusses on a ‘new vision’ for fathers as positive rangitira (leaders) and the facilitators communicate this is approached through reimagining their identity and gaining self-efficacy as a father.

### **Anger and Violence Related Risk Factors**

Another process, integral to family/whānau violence interventions, is the theory and approach organisations take in addressing the topic of violence. The facilitators describe how delivering the ‘violence kōrero’ is the most challenging aspect of the programme to present and manage. They share how it involves tact and sensitivity in order to reduce the likelihood of activating shame and guilt for the participants. The facilitators’ share that these emotions exist for the participants, however, to “point the finger” or to challenge too directly, Tamati believed, is likely to lead to defensiveness, which reduces the likelihood of learning and decreases engagement. Tamati stated “you gotta think hard and be patient”.

This is perhaps because at this stage of the programme the participants are still likely operating in the *old ways of being* which includes rationalisation, minimisation, and normalisation of violence either overtly or covertly. At this stage of the programme (session four) the facilitators took diverging approaches, whereby two facilitators reported delivering the content relating to violence with confidence while two others reported delivering the content tentatively and less-directly. The manual indicates there is a choice on whether to engage in the material regarding violence, and this choice is dictated by subjective opinion regarding the ‘feel’ of the room, by gauging the engagement of the group. Although there is only the ability to speculate/assume, if a less confident, less experienced facilitator is facilitating, or if the facilitator is more-or-less sensitive to the dynamic of the group, this is likely largely going to impact their approach, or in some cases avoidance of this particular section. Failing to effectively deliver this content contradicts much of literature on how to approach family violence, however it is unclear how efficacious this is in intervening with whānau violence.

As described in Chapter Two, family violence interventions place high value on the process of challenging and re-education regarding patriarchal beliefs about gender roles in relation to IPV. CBT models frame IPV and family violence as a psychological issue which is a function of emotion dysregulation, skills deficits and maladaptive or harmful beliefs. Parenting programmes, targeting men who use family violence, often utilise child behaviour management strategies to try and reduce fathers’ use of harsh discipline, and content addressing accountability for past abuse. A fundamental contrast exists between this and the whānau violence literature, whereby, as previously described, whānau violence is framed in the context of the impacts of colonisation. Interventions endeavour to undo the “myths related to the role of culture in whānau violence” (p. 36) via education of, and

engagement with kaupapa Māori mātauranga. Moreover, restorative practices are encouraged as a way of repairing the fissures within whānau, hapu and iwi. The FVDRC -6 (2020) also highlights the integrity of social support which includes cultural reconnection and restoration in the recommendations for intervention. MacFarlane (2019) explains that there exists important differences between Western and Indigenous psychologies. For Indigenous peoples, challenges are conceptualised and defined as issues relating to one's ecology, aligning with Durie's (1984) Te Whare Tapa Wha, and the Meihana Model which include key ecological and relational factors in the assessment and consideration of poor mental health/wellbeing. Moreover, as briefly mentioned above, Durie (2004) also shares that cultural identity for Indigenous peoples is considered to be a significant requirement for good health, whereas deculturation has been associated with poor health. With these factors in mind, it may seem plausible and potentially efficacious to engage with purely strength-based content rather than the traditional CBT or Duluth Model approach.

The Caring Dads Safer Children programme approaches this issue very differently, and their justifications are based on the principles uncovered from Scott and Crook's (2004) research and long history of clinical practice. Principle 1 states "Overly controlling behaviour, a sense of entitlement, and self-centred attitudes are primary problems of abusive fathers; thus, the development of child-management skills should not be an initial focus of intervention" (Scott & Crooks, p. 98). Importantly, most group-based parenting interventions direct their attention toward child and behaviour-management skills rather than the deeply entrenched harmful attitudes and behaviours of parents. Interestingly, when assessing programmes for men who are violent towards their partner, the content is focussed directly on challenging these maladaptive cognitions, beliefs and sense of entitlement. This is because there is an acknowledgement that for men to change, their

current attitudes and beliefs must be challenged and the value of moving from self-centred attitudes to acknowledging the needs of the other is amplified. In parenting programmes that do not address this sense of entitlement and simply address child-management strategies, Dankwort (1988) argues that these programmes are simply giving abusive men more strategies to control, which in turn may increase oppression and decrease child-centeredness. Finally, the authors state that interventions must directly address and counter attitudes that support their use of abusive control towards their child and in order to develop their capacity to appropriately respond to their child(ren)'s emotional and physical needs.

In order to dispel the illusion that violence is 'normal', Building Awesome Matua essentially takes a strengths-based approach, whereby the programme tells the stories of Māori pre-colonisation, about how tikanga and mana supported and encourage violence-free whānau. However, there is no direct assessment of violence and the degree to which it is addressed during the programme is up to the discretion of the facilitators. The research by Scott and Crooks (2004) would likely disagree with this approach, as the authors fundamentally believe that in order to change violent behaviour, programmes must address abuse supporting cognitions and attitudes and the sense of entitlement held by violent men. The te ao Māori perspective from the literature (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010) are non-specific about the content of 'dispelling the illusion', however they do emphasise the key values which would encourage change to being violence-free (whakapapa, tikanga, wairua, tapu, mauri and mana). According to Amokura (2009), in te ao Māori, whānau violence cannot operate within the bounds of these values, and restorative practices take place when it does.

Moreover, K. Walker et al. (2015) posit that change is the result of an accumulation of negative internal and external experiences as a result of the violence. However, in Frost's

(2017) research, the tāne Māori identified that it was through interactions with mana tangata (people of significance) that led to altered cognitions which included the shifting of their self-identity and the promotion of agency. This process left these participants with a sense of hope that change is possible without triggering feelings of shame and guilt. In Building Awesome Matua, this is married with education and context relating to Ngā Hau e Whā, enabling participants the opportunity to understand the context of their experiences, whether it be systems or whānau. Pipi et al. (2004) term this process as “decolonisation”, or the means by which to come to terms with their current social, economic, political and cultural context in conjunction with broader identity reformation. For Māori, treatment objectives are often about promoting wellbeing and the focus of research is on what works rather than a more Western approach of attempting to uncover causal mechanisms regarding what causes dysfunction (S. Macfarlane, 2009; McLauchlan, 2017). Such an approach is nicely articulated by Amokura (2009) when discussing Te Ara Humarei, the space and time where change in thinking, feeling, and living occurs;

Change is supported by working through it with others, having a close network of friends and family to fall back on for advice and support, attending men’s groups, or transformative training workshops/seminars to ‘skill and knowledge up’ on a range of self-improvement methods for more effective communication with whānau. The power of group synergy de-cloaks family violence by making it a ‘known phenomenon’ – healing need not, and arguably cannot, occur in isolation but through active sharing. More importantly, myths that promote the continuance of family violence, though pervasive, were challenged at individual and family levels (p. 60).

**Ka whangaia, ka tupu, ka puawai: That which is nurtured, will blossom and grow.**

The final prominent theme in the results was the facilitators nurturance of the voice and the mana of their participants. Facilitators’ perspectives regarding the skills and techniques they used to build a supportive and safe environment such as utilising self-disclosure, positive role modelling, and building a therapeutic alliance indicate that

facilitators implicitly understand their value as practice tools. The concept of *dual attentiveness*, or balancing the process and the programme content, was identified as inherent skills of at least three of the facilitators, based on their kōrero regarding supporting the process to unfold, while maintaining the balance of content. Importance was placed on this by the facilitators, as each of them spoke of the value of hearing their participants stories and experiences in order for the participants to learn from each other, rather than simply the facilitator. All of the facilitators exuded confidence in their role as facilitators and held aspirations to create a supportive environment for their participants in order to foster and nurture each of them individually and the wellbeing of the group as a whole.

*Catalysts for change* highlights two fundamental findings; firstly, it emphasises the tension that exists between the current literature relating to effective ways of intervening with fathers and family violence and the literature regarding the appropriate ways of intervening with whānau violence. Secondly it highlights fundamental philosophical notions of how change occurs for fathers who use violence. One school of thought believes that the best way to intervene is to directly challenge and “undo” old ways of being. The other school of thought (Indigenous) believes that moving towards being violence free is shaped by positive role models, restorative practices, reconnection with culture and community support. Importantly, the approach the programme creators have taken is logical considering the ToC rationale which privileges the Māori worldview. The ToC acknowledges the need to intervene, however, the ‘change strategy’ is a focus on the potential for creating a more adaptive identity as a father. This is achieved through purakau (sharing of stories, myths, and legends) and aligns with the ambition to make positive external (community and whānau), internal (self-identity) and spiritual (connected to self, others and God) connections which are then utilised as a catalyst for change.

### **6.1.2 Fidelity and Building Awesome Matua**

Another key finding relates to fidelity; although fidelity was not measured directly, throughout the interviews it became clear that each of the facilitators had added or changed elements of the programme. The justification for these changes were generally based on the *belief* that it was either a means of improving the programme by adding in information or activities that were missing, or that it benefitted the group process, such as relationship building or strengthening. Although the facilitators had good intentions, their modifications vary widely and might be related to any number of elements in the programme, which are more idiosyncratic than shared. Mowbray (2003) described social programs as consisting of a finite number of components and defined fidelity as the proportion of program components that were implemented.

Whilst the idiosyncratic nature of the facilitators' responses and the small sample size hinders our ability to generalise the findings, the information garnered underscores several areas of note. What is clear is that each of the facilitators modified the programme; at one end of the spectrum one facilitator described how he would spend one hour delivering the programme and then spend the remaining hour and a half "just talking with them, making myself available, answering any questions" (Anthony) indicating 'high programme modification'. Anthony's justification for this was because he believed that rather than the programme being the main catalyst for change, it was in fact the relationships he built with the participants, and therefore this is where he focussed his time. Research regarding the importance of the therapeutic alliance is often inconsistent, with some research suggesting it is the fundamental catalyst for change and others stating that it is necessary but incomplete without specific content and practitioner knowledge weaved in (Muran & Barber, 2010). The following section unpacks the importance of relationships

from a te ao Māori perspective. At the other end of the spectrum (low programme modification) Jordan described how he simply repackages or rephrases certain elements of the programme.

**The missing puzzle piece.** In the context of Building Awesome Matua, the programme content is steered by the evidence-informed rationale embedded in the theory of change; therefore, to follow the manual is to maintain a more evidence-informed practice. However, in the case of the theme “*the missing puzzle piece*”, the facilitators highlight an important disconnect between the programme content and some, if not many of the participants and their current circumstances, highlighting an important rationale for deviating from the programme. As described, two of the five facilitators describe in detail how many of the men are not living with their children at the time of engaging in the programme. The Building Awesome Matua brochure states “Who is Building Awesome Matua for? It’s designed for men who have a history or risk of violence within their families” (2018). Tamati provides a thought-provoking reflection on this statement, sharing that if the programme is for men who have used violence, or are at risk of doing so, it is likely that they will not be residing with their family, particularly when it is the former.

This highlights the importance of two key elements to consider. Firstly, should Building Awesome Matua include further information relating to separated parenting? Secondly, should Building Awesome Matua provide psychoeducation on how to attempt to repair broken relationships? As referenced in the introduction, the promotion of healthy relationships was traditionally developed and maintained through Māori practices such as restorative justice and “restoring the balance of whānau” (Cited in Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010, p. 45), and many resources reference the efficacy of this process for strengthening whānau relationships despite relationship status. Moreover, Caring Dads Safer Children (Scott et al.,



2018) highlight that there needs to be explicit education regarding the impact of being exposed to IPV on a child's development, being particularly clear about how abuse towards a child's mother impacts the safety and security of children even if the father is not 'directly' abusing the child. One of the Caring Dads Safer Children principles is "Children's safety and well-being is intrinsically connected to that of their mothers - "You can't be a good father and a disrespectful, abusive partner" (Scott et al., 2018, p.9).

In the Building Awesome Matua curriculum there is a small section in the second session that addresses the issue of inter-partner relationships from the perspective of emotional security theory (Davies & Martin, 2014) as part of the kōrero on anger and family violence. However, information specifically on relationships with an ex-partner is not explicitly addressed for another three sessions (rather briefly), and there is no explicit discussion of the special considerations fathers may have to make if they are not providing regular caregiving for their children. Thus, when considering the reflections of the facilitators about the need to adapt the programme concerning these issues, this seems to be an important area to consider for revision, particularly in relation to the emphasis on whānau safety and thriving in the Building Awesome Matua ToC. The literature highlights a host of behaviours which men may use when co-parenting with an ex-partner. They may mistreat children in retaliation, undermine their child's mother, they might vie for the "best parent" by relaxing rules, allowing the child privileges inappropriate for their age (i.e., violent video games), and they might use the child to report on their mother's behaviour (Scott & Crooks, 2004; Bancroft & Silverman, 2002). It is clear that on occasions where these actions occur, they are likely to impact a child's overall sense of emotional security and stability.

While the research remains mixed as to what benefits the children of violent fathers in regard to visitation, what is known, is that the ambition for Building Awesome Matua and other similar interventions, is to be in a position where fathers significantly decrease harmful behaviour towards their children and others and have increased parenting and conflict management skills. Therefore, the facilitators are describing a need for content which facilitates education and skill building around how the participants can best manage their visitation with their children to ensure it continues and is successful. The facilitators emphasised that they believe participants need further education to minimise ongoing conflict between participants and ex-partners for the benefit of the children involved. Moreover, advocacy and mentorship was also deemed necessary to facilitate and reinforce positive change. Tamati in particular, felt he had the skills to offer that information, support and education, and the ability within his organisation to make allowances for an extra session, and therefore modified the programme. For those facilitators who do not have that level of experience and organisational structure for additional support, it may be important to provide additional resources or even write supplementary sessions.

**Heart to heart, wairua to wairua, kanohi ki te kanohi**

“Inherent value came from people engaging with people, heart to heart, wairua to wairua, kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face)” (Amokura, 2009, p. 59). An integral part of te ao Māori is about hononga (relationships). The six programme values described earlier, are rooted in and interconnected with the connections and roles one plays within the whānau, hapu and iwi. For Māori, relationships underpin and give context to everything else, which provides the context for why some facilitators, such as Anthony, felt fidelity to programme content came second to relationship building. This illustrates the potential for conflicting paradigms when a Western, empirically driven notion of best practice meets tikanga Māori.

Amokura (2009) and Frost (2019) indicated that each of their participants who desisted from violence relied on the positive influence of others, those who acted as role-models, as kaiārahi, as a means to change violent behaviour and maintain a violence-free home. Therefore, when Dobbs et al. (2014) state that programmes and community-based interventions should be grounded in “te reo me ona tikanga (Māori language and culture), underpinned by Māori values and beliefs, Māori cultural paradigms and frameworks” (p. 1) and one fundamental and foundational part of this is relationships, then fidelity should be a secondary consideration. This tension between programme fidelity to ensure evidence-informed practice and tikanga Māori exists, but could be addressed through both training and better support to help facilitators navigate these joint needs. Moreover, the Building Awesome Matua ToC states that healing is possible, and that through relationships and connectedness human flourishing can be achieved.

Furthermore, the issue of limited time is also an important issue that affects both fidelity and whanaungatanga. Each of the facilitators referred to the need for more sessions and further support for the participants, and three described the fact that some participants were still engaged with the organisation even after the programme was finished. Whanaungatanga takes time and likely unfolds in different ways depending on the participants and the facilitator’s skill at promoting group cohesion. As was noted in Chapter Two, the Caring Dads programme is generally 17 weekly sessions. This is considerably longer than Building Awesome Matua and this issue is addressed in more detail below.

## **6.2 Implications for Building Awesome Matua**

### **6.2.1 *Supervision, Training and Support: A Community of Facilitators***

Fraser et al (2009) describe that part of the revision stage of a community programme is understanding any organisational and contextual implementation issues. As

referenced in the results section, the facilitators come from various backgrounds, have varied levels of experience working in community services generally, and also have varied levels of experience delivering Building Awesome Matua. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that they are likely to have varying needs in terms of support. What was evident from the results was that there was the desire to have more communication with The Parenting Place (who manage the logistics and training). This motivation to connect with The Parenting Place was two-fold. Firstly, based on their experiences from the training sessions, the facilitators believed there would be continued connection between themselves and the other facilitators and that this would be facilitated by Parenting Place. They shared that they aspire to be a community of facilitators where they can share, reflect, learn and grow together, all centred around the shared vision of whānau that are violence free and thriving. The second motivation is to improve their practice as facilitators, to grow their skills and to upskill in this particular area. It is evident that part of the motivation for this is because of the inherent belief in the value of the programme and its kaupapa. The facilitators share a vision and appreciate the ability to engage in Kaupapa Māori work with tāne Māori. The Building Awesome Matua programme manual states that “Building Awesome Matua is an opportunity for each stakeholder to learn from each other and build on their knowledge. Therefore, harnessing and honouring the multiple voices involved in this project and sharing will be a key feature of evaluation.” The facilitators seemed to believe that this would be an ongoing process, rather than a one-off evaluation.

Maintaining closer relationships between organisational body and facilitators relates back to the concept of fidelity. The Caring Dads programme holds training and supervision as one of the more important elements in maintaining quality and fidelity. This organisation also includes online training modules and differing levels of accreditation in order to

motivate and support facilitator professional development and maintain standards of practice. Caring Dads (2018) is much further advanced in the programme life-cycle; however, in understanding it is something they value, it offers room for reflection on what may also be valuable for the growth of facilitators. Additionally, in creating a community of facilitators, this would align with many of the kaupapa Māori principles shared throughout this study.

In regard to supervision, the facilitators are not directly supervised by anyone from The Parenting Place or The Salvation Army and at this stage there is no formal accreditation or further training outside of the initial two-day training offered to each facilitator and any further support is likely supplied by the facilitators' organisation. Despite a lack of empirical research, the literature does focus on the importance of ongoing supervision for effective programme facilitation (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005). Supervision reinforces the values and ethical considerations of a programme and gives facilitators a chance to improve their practice (Yalom, 2005). Supervision is particularly critical for facilitators who are either new to the process of delivering groups and/or delivering the programme content. Moreover, supervision creates an opportunity for a programme design team to receive ongoing feedback and identify the small issues that can quickly be addressed. Given the collaborative approach to the development and implementation of Building Awesome Matua, it would seem that addressing these issues of support and supervision would help better align the programme with the vision of ako (reciprocated learning).

### **6.2.2 Dosage and Desistance**

Drawing on the theme "Walking the path to create the road" a picture builds in understanding the facilitators' perspectives on what enables successful behaviour change. This theme highlights the process of behaviour change in relation to decreasing violence and

increasing positive whānau connectedness. Each of the facilitators commented on the fact that the programme is one part of the process of change and this notion is reiterated in elements of the programme content and previously referenced literature regarding desistance (Frost, 2019; Roguski & Gregory, 2014). The facilitators share uncertainty about the ability to effect change when the programme is only 8 weeks and shared the desire for the programme to be longer. The facilitators shared that their organisations continue to support participants who may not fit with the group environment, and three facilitators explicitly shared that they continue to support participants after the official group work is finished as part of the services offered by their organisation.

The introduction chapter describes in detail the heterogeneity of fathers who use violence, and the facilitators also described the need for a personalised element of the programme. The transformation of Building Awesome Matua participants is varied, and while the facilitators describe ‘success stories’, they also describe some men who are very slow to adjust and integrate into the group environment and who take longer than others to grasp concepts or engage in the group at all. Additionally, as expected, the facilitators described some men who are simply “not ready” to start the process of change, indicating that these participants are the ones who are likely to desist their involvement with the organisation and their participation in the group. Roguski and Gregory (2014) describe providing support only during the time programme participants spend in the programme, as an illogical approach to family violence intervention because their participants had all “learned violence, and associated attitudes and behaviours, over their lives” (p. 42), highlighting that much of their violent behaviour was deeply entrenched and included behaviours which had been reinforced over several decades.

What the current research identified through the interviews was that it is likely that the facilitators have little knowledge about the impact of the programme when whānau are not involved. Two facilitators shared how they had on some occasions (the initial session or the graduation session) met the participants whānau, however, it was unclear how consistent their involvement was. When whānau are not involved it is likely quite difficult for the facilitators to determine to what extent the programme changes the outcomes for these participants, the safety of the people in the participant's home and who else can be brought into the support system. The current research recognises this is not always possible, however, advocates for a case-management type element to be included or prioritised in line with the Caring Dads programme. This would increase insight into safety the safety of whānau and acts also as a means of further supporting the participants outside of the programme.

Moeover, research supports the notion of on-going support for those who attend family/whānau violence interventions (Roguski & Gregory, 2014; Morran, 2013; Silvergleid and Mankowski, 2006). For Māori communities, Te Puni Kōkiri (2010) emphasises that whānau and hapu are key intervention groups. The authors describe how the concept of collective responsibility is integral in creating the building-blocks for long-term prevention. The facilitators of Building Awesome Matua portrayed their interests in continuing relationships with the programme participants, and either explicitly or implicitly communicated the value of ongoing, safe and reliable relationships for these men. The facilitators also describe the notion of what Te Puni Kōkiri (2010) call, *collective understanding*, stating that the collective belief that violence is normal means it “was easily perpetrated because it was hidden within the community and by the community” (p.48) Therefore, the facilitators justification for wanting to work in and as a community means

they would be able to intervene at the structural level to redefine a collective understanding of how harmful violence is to the intricate tapestry of whānau, hapu and iwi.

The final thought regarding this kōrero is to understand a central parallel identified. As Te Puni Kōkiri (2010) state, Pākehā programmes and models are ineffective at creating any significant or lasting change for Māori. Kaupapa Māori programmes “are based on Māori concepts, values, beliefs, practices and processes” (p. 52). The inherent nature of these concepts, values, beliefs, practices, and processes dictates that for a whānau violence intervention to be as successful as possible, one must prioritise the interconnectedness of whānau from mokopuna, tamariki to tupuna. Therefore, the intervention must move away from focussing on “the 1-on-1 like dysfunction within the relationship” and acknowledge that whānau violence “transgresses and denigrates not only the individual but the whole of our te ao Māori” (Te Puni Kōkiri, p.49). Although the current research acknowledges and sympathises with the current constraints, the logistical challenges and the many other challenges faced by non-profit organisations in a sector challenged for resources, it too emphasises and warns against the drift from the original ambitions of the programme. Despite Building Awesome Matua’s culturally centred kaupapa, values and teachings, it is clear that the 8-week group itself is likely not enough to implement the change that is needed for both victims and perpetrators of whānau violence, an opinion that is shared not only by the facilitators but also by the referenced literature. The below quote offers an impactful and apt summary of the importance of not simply relying on programmes but also engaging in community and collective approaches to wellbeing;

“Drawing on the wisdom of our tūpuna and traditions is not to return us to a mythic past or golden age – our people have always adapted to new circumstances and experimented with new technology. Rather it is to understand and be guided by the symbols, values and principles that can enhance our capacity to live together peacefully as whānau and communities. Our capacity for resilience as an indigenous people is fed and



nourished by our language, traditional practices and oral traditions. Dr Bruce Perry argues that ‘traditional ways are permeated with empirically derived wisdom’ and advocates adherence to the practices of indigenous peoples for the intergenerational transmission of knowledge and raising of children. He advocates for community and collective approaches to community building to ensure that family, child rearing and relationships do not become the exclusive domains of experts and specialist programmes” (Cited in Te Puni Kōkiri, 2013, p.21).

### **6.2.3 *He Awa Whira - The Braided Rivers Approach, and Future Research***

A reduction in anger and violence related risk factors, as well as the development of several key themes, have been identified as important factors for the Building Awesome Matua research team to investigate. The current study has also acknowledged the potential conflict or tension in approaches to addressing whānau violence between Indigenous and Western worldviews. This section of the discussion offers a brief proposal of a way to move forward via the blending of knowledge for better outcomes.

According to Champagne (2007), the features that define indigenous cultures, including their unique and distinctive pedagogical, philosophical, and theoretical characteristics are often in conflict with the philosophies of the dominant culture. In the current study this too has been identified. In opening, the current study produced a Western-centric presentation of the literature regarding family violence, intimate partner violence, fathers who use violence and the present landscape regarding intervention. As the study moved through and focussed more on the most relevant aspects of the research; whānau violence, tāne Māori and interventions for tāne Māori, the observant reader is likely to have noticed a shift in the literature available, and the way in which concepts were described. What was also evident is the tension in the practice of group programmes between Western empirical evidence and Indigenous values and knowledge.

Macfarlane and Macfarlane (2019) emphasise that, too often, the underlying motivations of research continue to be grounded in Western dominant values, processes, and motivations. He Awa Whira – The Braided Rivers Approach (See Figure 6.1), presented by Macfarlane et al. (2015), suggests that the blending of knowledge, Indigenous and Western, may hold immense value and is fundamentally more appropriate in aligning with Ti Tiriti o Waitangi values of partnership, protection, and participation. Durie (2006) proposed that; “it is necessary to make a plea for an interdependent and innovative theoretical space where the two streams of knowledge are able to blend and interact, and in doing so, facilitate greater sociocultural understanding and better outcomes for Indigenous individuals or groups (p. 52)”

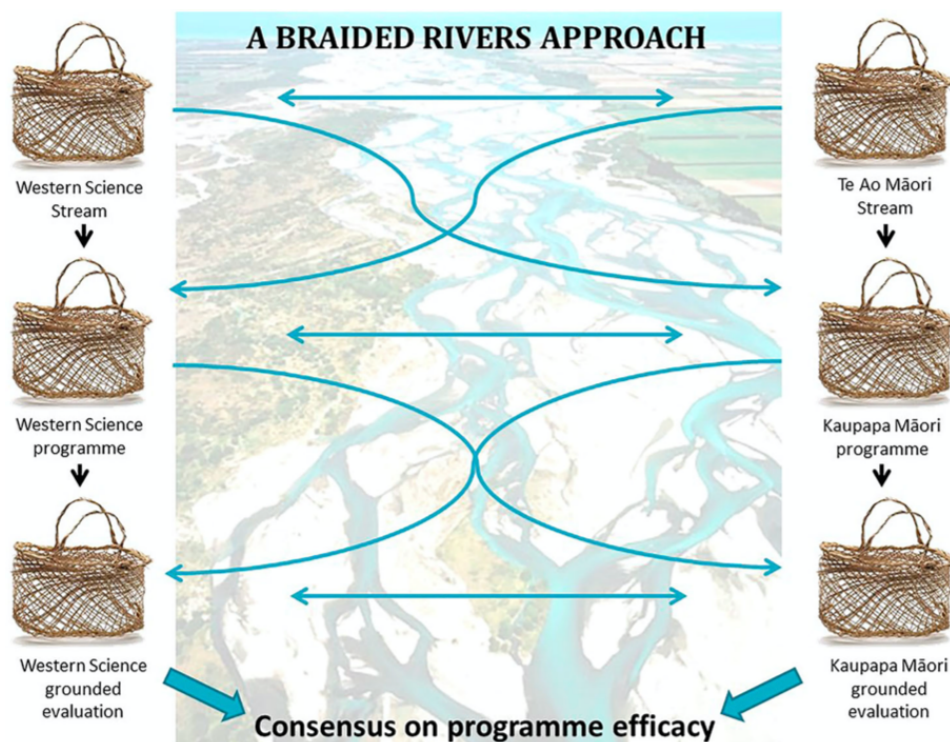


Figure 6.1: He Awa Whiria: A Braided Rivers Approach (Macfarlane, Macfarlane & Gillon, 2015)

The current study suggests that the way forward, and a way to manage the tension between Māori values and the literature regarding ‘best-practice’ is to take a flexible approach. Overtime researchers and programme developers can then utilise He Awa Whira

as a means to understand Western and Indigenous knowledge as both independent and interdependent contributions to epistemology and ontology. The following section also suggests some key areas of future research to move towards more effective ways of researching and intervening in family/whānau violence in a bicultural society.

### **Future Research**

Future research opportunities in this area are vast and much of the areas of investigation have been referred to throughout the discussion. Outside of the specific objectives of this project there are several key areas which would be beneficial to explore. As stated by Macfarlane and Macfarlane. (2019), Kaupapa Māori research incorporates processes that include relationship building within wider networks, community consultation and research with whānau, hapu and iwi. Therefore, further research with the wider community, including whānau, may serve to benefit and complement the current research. Moreover, very little research is available regarding the current state of Kaupapa Māori programmes outside of what was explored in the current research. Therefore, an area of interest would also be the synthesis of contemporary programmes, in conjunction with a framework within which to understand how well they are working in Māori communities.

The desistance literature offers important qualitative insights into the process of change. Therefore, the current research believes the exploration of Building Awesome Matua in conjunction with participants who have found success after attending the programme would be highly beneficial. Finally, there may be value in the direct comparison between Building Awesome Matua and Caring Dads via a content analysis. This process is likely to be fraught with the tension between Kaupapa Māori principles, constructs and philosophies and the Western research methodologies, sample characteristics and philosophy that underpins Caring Dads.

### **6.3 Strengths and Limitations**

The first point to note is both a strength and a limitation of this study. The interview garnered a rich and detailed narrative from the facilitators which served to highlight the diverse and often idiosyncratic nature of the facilitators' experiences. This, in conjunction with the nature and number of objectives to be covered, meant that the data compiled was sizeable with a wide range of results to be described and discussed. Although these results are likely to be important to future iterations of Building Awesome Matua, it is important to keep in mind the general limitations of cross-sectional, qualitative research and the lack of generalisability outside of Building Awesome Matua.

The second limitation is related to the small scope of the programme. With only 5 participants, the current study was able to survey 30% of the Building Awesome Matua facilitators at the time of data collection. Whilst the percentage of facilitators is acceptable for an in-depth qualitative study, the number of facilitators, and the many idiosyncrasies in their responses may hinder generalisability to the perspectives of other facilitators. Thus, the results from the study should be examined again as the programme grows and is refined and with a methodology that more readily includes the perspectives of a large representative sample of facilitators.

A further limitation was the scope of the project. The current study was unable to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the curriculum and the content from each of the eight sessions. This meant that the information provided by the facilitators was generally related to rather broad concepts that concerned the overall curriculum, such as the programme values, and it was less common to receive feedback regarding particular resources.

A key strength of the study was identification of the more influential values the facilitators drew on, which consisted of content and supported the facilitator process. These

values included aroha, whanaungatanga, mana and reconceptualising. The study identified these as clear tenets of the programme, as it stands, that facilitators relied more heavily on. The current study also indicates that, despite a limited number of resources from the literature to draw from the te ao Māori literature, that what is there (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010; and Transforming Whānau) is clear, relevant and could be utilised to improve the programme, giving insight into additional content.

#### **6.4 Summary**

Over the past 30 years there has been increased interest and employment of Māori research and initiatives which are grounded in and support tikanga Māori (Macfarlane & Macfarlane, 2019; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2019). In interviewing the facilitators of this novel, strengths-based, kaupapa Māori support programme for tāne desisting from whānau violence, this project aimed to contribute to the small but growing body of research on the prevention and intervention of whānau violence and provide a practical formative evaluation for key stakeholders. The core objectives were to utilise the collaboration between practitioner(s) and researcher(s) to analyse and assess the current version of the Building Awesome Matua programme in order to understand facilitators' perspectives of programme efficacy, goodness of fit, and fidelity. This process uncovered the diverse experiences of facilitators in facilitating Building Awesome Matua. Several key elements were identified as being fundamental and relied upon heavily because of their perceived efficacy and effectiveness in motivating change. In comparing Building Awesome Matua the most current literature, the current research highlighted both the strengths and the areas for further investigation for Building Awesome Matua, with the acknowledgment that there may be tension between the Western evidence-base and Kaupapa Māori research regarding how to best intervene with violent fathers.

The facilitators describe that several of the values embedded in the programme align with the whānau violence literature and its position regarding transformative factors. This was the process described by the facilitators, whereby acknowledgment, education, and reflective group work regarding integral Māori cultural constructs and philosophies ignited the motivation for participants to change, and much of this process supported the ambitions of the Building Awesome Matua ToC. Moreover, relationships, including the group dynamics and the facilitator-participant relationship were utilised as a transformative mechanism for change and for modelling the unique imperatives of relational practices and protocols within te ao Māori. This was expressed through the facilitators respect for participants, their belief in the participants own mana motuhake (self-determination), and their own diverse roles as facilitators. These roles included their position as rangitira (leaders), as kaitiakitanga (guardians) and as a unifying force (kotahitanga). The facilitators also acknowledged the importance of education regarding the “contemporary influences that prohibit or undermine the practice of cultural constructs from te ao Māori” (Pitama et al., 2017, p. 36). This was evidenced by their stance on the importance of the education and contextualising of their Māori participants’ realities in the context of colonisation, and their belief in the ability to positively impact participants through education.

The discussion chapter presented the above in the context of the literature regarding an important evidence-based programme, Caring Dads, and utilised their research as a means to understand what is working well in the context of what is known about programmes for men who use violence. Moreover, it highlighted that dosage, intensity and post-programme support are likely the most fundamental areas of investigation. Both dosage and post-programme support recommendations align with the desistance literature and the kaupapa way of working, in that the importance of time, relationships and

inclusivity of whānau and wider community supports is integral in desistance. This project highlights the experiences of the facilitators, as well as offers insight into the context and values which the facilitators believe best supports the participants to make positive changes. The blending of mātauranga/knowledge from both Western and Māori worldviews holds great potential for seeking solutions to Indigenous challenges (Macfarlane et al, 2015).

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## **Appendix A**

### **Interview Schedule**

**The interview schedule is outlined in the chronological steps below:**

- **Interviewer introduction (mihi) and whakawhānaungatanga:**

Interviewer (Andrea Musgrave – primary researcher) will begin by providing participants with the option to begin with something such as a karakia or a pepeha and engage in the process of whakawhānaungatanga. The interviewer will introduce herself with a mihi similar to that in the information sheet, and will discuss how she came to be involved in this project, clarify her role, and the role of the other investigators (principal investigator and supervisors). The interviewer will also ask the facilitator about themselves and about their experience, this will be an informal discussion and it will be highlighted to the facilitator that this information will not be included in the research.

- **Present the facilitator with a koha**

The interviewer will thank the facilitator for being a part of the research and present them with a koha to show appreciation for their time and generous contribution. Kai will also be offered to the facilitator.

- **Provide/review information and consent form**

The interviewer will review all of the information on the consent form with the participant and confirm the participants' consent to participate in the research. The researcher will ensure the form is signed and dated. The interviewer will also briefly describe how the semi structured interview format works and explain that even though the interview is being recorded questions from the participants to the interviewer can still be answered or clarification can be given. The interviewer will also explain that there is no obligation to answer the questions and the facilitator can ask to move to the next question should they wish to do so.

- **Confirm whether facilitator would like their interview manuscript to edit**

The interviewer will explain the purpose of reviewing the transcript and that there is the option to amend it should the participant want to. The interviewer will confirm whether the facilitator would like the opportunity to review and edit the transcript and the interviewer will let the participant know the approximate timeline to receive this.

- **Turn on digital audio recorder and begin interview**

### **Section 1:**

#### **Relevance of cultural content**

Building Awesome Matua is built on the themes of whānaungatanga, manaakitanga, wairuatanga, ako, aroha, mana motuhake.

What I'd like to do is walk through these themes one-by-one, firstly explaining how Breakthrough defines each theme and how it is related to the programme. For each theme there are several questions.....

### **Whanaungatanga:**

Starting with **whanaungatanga** – Breakthrough describes this as “Interconnected, reciprocal relationships that contribute to the whole.”

And in relation to Breakthrough it is applied through highlighting the interwoven series of relationships that places fathers and their families at the centre.

- Can you explain how you feel this is (or isn't) addressed in the programme content and whether the participants responded well to this concept?
- Do you have any examples of how participants received or interacted with these ideas? Or any memorable conversations you may have had about the whānaungatanga and the place of the father within this?
- Do you have any suggestions on how this could be strengthened or any additions to this concept?

### **Manaakitanga:**

Moving on to **manaakitanga** which in the context of Breakthrough is defined as “to enhance the mana of others” by using a “strengths-based, mana-enhancing kaupapa”.

- Can you explain how you feel this is (or isn't) addressed in the programme content? Is the content strength-based and mana enhancing and how/why? How do you think the participants responded to this concept?
- Do you have any examples of how participants received or interacted with these ideas?
- Do you have any suggestions on how this could be strengthened or any additions to this concept?

### **Wairuatanga:**

Is the acknowledgement of the spiritual existence through and all around us and Breakthrough explains that wairua is woven throughout the content and is intentional in promoting awareness and experience for all involved.

- Can you explain how you feel this is (or isn't) addressed in the programme content and whether the participants responded well to this concept?
- Do you have any examples of how participants received or interacted with these ideas?

- Do you have any suggestions on how this could be strengthened or any additions to this concept?

### **Aroha – to protect and promote another’s life essence**

“Breakthrough upholds the vitality of aroha as a fundamentally transformational force.”

- Can you explain how you feel this is (or isn’t) addressed in the programme content and whether the participants responded well to this concept?
- Do you have any examples of how participants received or interacted with these ideas?
- Do you have any suggestions on how this could be strengthened or any additions to this concept?

### **Ako:**

Or reciprocal learning

Breakthrough is an opportunity for each stakeholder to learn from each other and build on their knowledge. Therefore, harnessing and honouring the multiple voices involved in this project and sharing will be a key feature of evaluation.

- Can you explain how you feel this is (or isn’t) addressed in the programme content and whether the participants responded well to this concept?
- Do you have any examples of how participants received or interacted with these ideas?
- Do you have any suggestions on how this could be strengthened or any additions to this concept?

### **Mana motuhake – self-determination and agency within one’s destiny**

Breakthrough recognises the agency of each father participating and each hosting centre to define their own successes in addition to, and perhaps independent of, the project outcomes.

- Can you explain how you feel this is (or isn’t) addressed in the programme content and whether the participants responded well to this concept?
- Do you have any examples of how participants received or interacted with these ideas?
- Do you have any suggestions on how this could be strengthened or any additions to this concept?

How well do you feel the programme strengthens cultural connection and identity what in the programme helps achieve this?

- If response is “not well” then follow up with; How could this element be strengthened?

### **Section 2:**

#### **Degree to which the curriculum as a whole meet’s participants’ needs**

For this question, I’d like you to think of the programme as a whole

- One of the goals of the programme is to increase parental efficacy by teaching parenting skills.
  - Thinking about the participants who complete the course, how well do you think Breakthrough facilitates learning parenting skills?
  - What aspects of the programme help achieve this? Can you think of specific elements of the programme?
- Another goal is to improve whānau relationships. How do you feel the programme improves whanau relationship quality and can you think of any specific examples or what in the programme helps achieve this?
  - If response is “not well” then follow up with; How could this element be strengthened?
- Reduction in anger. How well do you feel the programme facilitates a reduction in anger, and other violence related risk factors and what in the programme helps achieve this?
  - If response is “not well” then follow up with; How could this element be strengthened?

### **Section 3:**

#### **Process of facilitating a group parenting course with this unique focus and objectives;**

- In terms of group dynamics and building relationships with and between participants. How easy or hard was it building trust, respect and empathy among groups members?
- What was helpful in facilitating this?
- What did you find challenging during this process and why?

#### **Logistics and Health and Safety**



- During the assessment, enrolment and duration of the programme were there any elements that hindered how you delivered the programme or engaged with the participants?
  - If Yes, please describe this
  - If No, what supported the delivery of the programme? i.e., what aspects made it easy to deliver or flow well specifically?
- Did you at any point feel there were concerns for your safety or the safety of groups members?
  - If Yes, please describe this
  - If No, what supported the environment to make it feel safe

#### **Section 4:**

#### **Level of participants' engagement with and application of course content**

- Were there patterns in participant attendance or a time of noticeable drop-off? What are your thoughts on why this is?
- To what extent did the participants engage, connect with or enjoy the content of the programme?
  - What elements do you think the participants found particularly enjoyable or resonated the most?
  - What elements do you think the participants struggled to engage with or were less enjoyable?
- Were there particular aspects or parts of the programme that created tension or defensiveness with the participants?
  - Why do you think the participants became defensive?
- Were there any parts of the programme where participants became noticeably bored or distracted?
  - Why do you think this is and what changes could you suggest to avoid this?

- **Interview conclusion and debrief:**

At this time the interviewer will thank the participant for their involvement in the research. Elements of the interview are likely to bring up frustrations and critiques of the service the participant is providing. Because emotional or mental distress may accompany this the interviewer will recommend the participant seek clinical supervision provided by their organisation. In the case of supervision not being provided by their organisation the primary researcher has agreed to anonymously follow up with the organisations regarding their access to EAP services or other anonymous support the organisation provides.



## Appendix B

### Building Awesome Matua (Breakthrough) Theory of Change

This Appendix details, in full length, the Building Awesome Matua Theory of Change (2018) as written by the programme development team. Please note the text has been transcribed from the original document into plain format below, as its original format was not compatible in a word file.

#### **Family Violence: Why do we need Building Awesome Matua?**

- Victim focused sector; need to move towards a whanau context and focus rather than compartmentalising
- Restoration of self – finding a wholeness; restoring to...providing hope, optimism, vision, reconnection
- Need to recognize the mana of fathers, empowering them
- Need to do something different for men;
- Take the focus off of violence and onto healthy flourishing families
- Rather than integrating Māori, we are starting with te ao Māori (based on prevalence rates)
- Collaboration of 2 organisations with complimentary strengths; opportunity to inform wider work

#### **Family Violence in NZ. Why?**

- Difficult adaptation to a colonised culture, immasculinisation of fathers and their role
- Unknown, unrecognized, unvalued role
- Disconnection of the role of the man from the whanau, society's perpetuation of it
- Poor communication; severance of whanaungatanga
- Family and personal history of violence, 'hardness', 'staunch', it is OK mythology; alternative is seen as weakness
- Violence – has been adaptive, reinforcing, promotes survival, esteem, respect
- No realistic alternative; vacuum of positive opportunities
- Poor coping strategies
- risk factors

#### ***Primary Outcomes and related rationale***

##### **1. Learning parenting skills, increased parental efficacy**

- Parenting skills influence family flourishing by creating pathways to connection and relationship. Improving people's parenting skills will help draw out the participants' inherent ability to connect with their child.

- Parents will learn about the four parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, neglectful) and see the advantages of adopting an authoritative (parent coach), parenting style with their children.
- Information and exercises on communication, listening, and home atmosphere will help men see their parenting from their children's perspectives. This perspective taking will motivate a shift in improving parenting strategies to better meet children's needs.

## **2. Improved whanau relationship quality and strengthened cultural connection, identity**

- This hikoi privileges Māori worldview, concepts, and practices in programme content; teaches basic te reo me ona tikanga Māori; requires facilitators/organisations to demonstrate their capacity to cater to Māori worldview and values; and will offer noho Marae 'camp' options run within tikanga and mātauranga Māori. Thus, participants will be exposed to a Māori worldview and vision for their family that is culturally empowering, and engenders whanaungatanga.
- According to the research and clinical experience of Scott and colleagues (Caring Dads Safer Children; 2004, 2010, 2014), abusive fathers' lack of recognition and prioritization of their children's needs for love, respect, and autonomy is the most important issue that needs to be addressed in an intervention. Breakthrough's Building Awesome Matua addresses this issue by prioritizing children as taonga (treasure), endowed with mana. Breakthrough provides fathers with a new vision for their role as rangatira. Through their unconditional love for their children, fathers act as a guardian and facilitator of their children's development, supporting the collective whanau.
- Men with a history of family violence often have a strong need to control their partner or children, yet struggle with controlling their own emotions and impulsive behaviour (Scott and colleagues; 2004, 2010, 2014). Breakthrough's Building Awesome Matua addresses this issue by helping father's see the behaviours/attitudes that they are modelling for their children, their communication patterns, emotion regulation, and behaviour management strategies. As men become less controlling, more responsive and engaged, it will create the conditions which will facilitate the opportunity for relationships to be strengthened.

## **3. Reduction in anger, and other violence related risk factors**

- Reduction in anger and other violent related risk factors may be achieved through focus on family flourishing and whanau hauora.
- Building Awesome Whanau understands that only changing violent behaviour, does not lead to violence free homes. Therefore, Building Awesome Matua delves into deeper core issues which examine what it means to live in relationship with other people. We hope offering tools and strategies for building healthy relationships will result in safer family environments and more violent free homes.
- Preventing violence includes re-framing respect for women/children. Building Awesome Matua educates on the mana each human inherently has and the role of fathers to facilitate their children's mana and honour their taunga.

#### **4. Connection, Support and Contribution**

- Providing education and support will encourage participants to make internal (self), external (family and community) and spiritual (cultural and God) connections and to grow in confidence and self-expression so they can share their inherent gifts and strengths with others.
- Men understand male gender functioning, societal pressure and gender biases and as such are able to be excellent role models and to hold other men accountable for their behaviour
- Positive contribution or generosity develops feelings of altruism which in turn creates a positive identity that people want to live up to.